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MAURICE,
THE ELECTOR OF SAXONY.

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE OF THE
SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

BY MRS. COLQUHOUN.

Dedicated, by Permission,
TO
HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF SAXONY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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MAURICE,

THE

ELECTOR OF SAXONY.



CHAPTER I.

CLOTILDA was suffered to remain for that evening free from intrusion in the apartments allotted to her, but it was in vain that either Thumelda or herself sought repose; she could not conceal from herself the imminent peril of her situation;—and where could she expect aid, shut up in a castle, which had ever been considered almost impreg-

nable from its position and strength, in the power of a man who would not quail at the commission of murder? Should Krantz ultimately succeed in escaping, days must elapse before he could reach those who would bring her succour;—she might gain a brief respite; but this was doubtful, and she felt that her preservation from dishonour could only be attempted on the spur of the moment.

From a bed, which such reflections rendered a bed of torture and anxiety, she arose early, and unrefreshed. In the course of an hour a heavy footfall at the door of the room destined for their sitting apartment arrested their attention, and the loud withdrawing of bolts sent the colour from her cheek;—Ludwig entered with breakfast, followed by an attendant.

“Ladies,” he said addressing them gruffly, “the Baron has given me the charge of your safe keeping; I hope you will

follow my counsel, and receive him with duty and respect, and not trouble me to enforce his orders;—he expects you to greet him courteously.”

He then deposited the breakfast on the table, and placing conspicuously before them a loaf of bread, said, with peculiar expression:—

“Divide this between you,—you will find it palatable; if you should require any thing further than I have provided, there is one without who waits your commands, I shall return at noon;” and bowing, he left them.

Clotilda hastily divided the bread, as she had been told to do; and discovered a small dagger, which was buried to the hilt;—she concealed the weapon in her bosom, but shuddered as she did so, doubting if, in any extremity, she could bring herself to use it.

The poor prisoners had not even the con-

solation of seeing the village from their windows, which looked upon the roofs of some low buildings in the yard beneath, and the glimpse which could be obtained of the country beyond, presented no signs of habitation.

Ludwig's short discourse, although uttered harshly, evidently conveyed some latent meaning, which he was compelled to disguise in the presence of his followers; she therefore determined to shape her conduct accordingly, and to conceal from her persecutor as much as possible the abhorrence she felt towards him.

We have viewed her hitherto as a character rather acted upon by circumstances, than capable of action; but if such is the reader's impression, we must hasten to undeceive him.—The last of her race, who for generations had been distinguished for bravery and virtue, their noble qualities seemed to be concentrated in her. Eminently

beautiful, with the softest expression of countenance and the gentlest demeanour, she possessed judgment beyond her age, for she had barely seen nineteen summers. The courage inherited from her ancestors, enabled her to bear up with fortitude under personal danger; her affections were so powerful, that unless they had been regulated by reason, they would have verged on passions; her imagination so vivid, that but for the same habit of reflection, it would have amounted to giddiness.

The good Abbess's careful education had so directed and guided her high qualities, that they had not degenerated into faults;—her heart was as pure as true. It may be imagined how great a constraint she must have put upon herself, in dissimulating her detestation of her oppressor. When Ludwig entered at noon, she was prepared to notify her acquiescence with his desire of the morning; but unfortunately he was fol-

lowed closely by his two attendants ;—he looked at her with meaning, however, saying :—

“The Baron proposes to visit you, lady, this afternoon.”

“I shall receive him,” replied Clotilda, “in a manner due to myself.”

It may not be irrelevant in this place to observe, that, previous to their flight from the mill, Krantz, on learning from Ludwig of the Baron’s arrival at the Castle, had communicated to him (Ludwig) in part her history ; this confidence had interested him still more in her fate, and Krantz’s unvaried charity and kindness towards his helpless grandmother, bound him to give assistance to the good man’s child, whose faithful generosity had placed her in her present dilemma.

We are invariably more interested in a person whom we have once assisted, and a second service is usually performed even more willingly than a first ; thus it was with

Ludwig; when he found that he had been the chosen medium for the preservation of Clotilda's boy, he was doubly devoted to her interest.

Upon some pretence, he dismissed the other attendants, and seeing the disinclination the unhappy prisoners felt to taste the viands before them, gently urged them not to send them away untouched.

“Fear not, but for heaven's sake waste not your strength by abstinence—I have a few moments only for brief words—he will probably propose an immediate union, deny him not, but gain time—I will guard, but possibly may not be in attendance upon you, for he must not suspect me—I shall feign to request my dismissal as gaoler; but will equally watch to serve you, lady, and preserve both you and your child from harm.”

He then withdrew, and now by stealth examined every part of the Castle; he was sure there must be some secret outlet

known only to the monk ; but no trace of it could he find ; every plan for Clotilda's escape was rejected as soon as formed in his mind ;--in moody silence he paced the ramparts, and ultimately came to the determination that the Baron should fall by his hand rather than he would be a tame spectator, while he consummated his villany ;--he shrunk from the idea of deliberate assassination, however urgent the necessity, but tortured his imagination in vain to devise any other means for the release of his captives.

The apartments in which Clotilda and her companion were confined were on the western side of the building, and the golden tinted sky had already given intimation of the day's decline, when Reiterstein intruded his unwelcome presence. He was dressed with great care, and some splendour ;--a purpoint of green velvet, slashed with satin of the same colour and richly laced

with gold, fitted closely to his shape;—a purple cloak of similar material, lined with white damask silk, trimmed with dark sable, and fastened by a golden chain, hung loosely from his shoulders, he held in his hand a bonnet which was of black velvet, and into which a single heron's feather was attached by a ruby of some value.—He had studied the dress the best calculated to set off his figure to advantage, and approached Clotilda with more than his ordinary courtesy of manner, bowing lowly as he kissed her hand. He gazed for a few moments on his victim with evident admiration, and endeavoured to throw some gentleness into his tone and manner; but like an indifferent picture highly varnished, these outward seemings served but to render the defects more apparent;—his smile, which he intended to be winning, was sinister;—the malicious triumph of his eye shot through the glances he wished to beam

with tenderness. The mask was too close a resemblance to the person who attempted to conceal himself under it, to succeed in inducing deception.

Clotilda arose, bowed slightly, and re-seated herself in the recess of the window, from which, previously to his entrance, she had been hopelessly gazing. Reiterstein appeared at a loss how to commence or shape his discourse,—and she remained silent.

“I have been careful,” he at last observed, “not to intrude into the presence of my fair cousin, until I judged she might have rested from the fatigue of a long journey; but my anxiety to inquire in person of her welfare, would brook no further delay. I grieve that apartments more fitted to the honour I would show her were not in readiness for her reception; it concerns me also that I have been constrained in a manner somewhat unceremonious to reclaim my right of guardianship, and secure her com-

pany as my honoured guest at Reiterstein by means unsuitable to her rank and my own inclination to pay her all deference and homage; but I had no other alternative, by which I could secure the happiness I now enjoy. The first evil will, I trust, soon be remedied by the distinguished treatment she will receive,—and I hope I shall find excuse in her candid mind for measures, which as I have stated, I was most reluctantly compelled to take.”

Clotilda replied: “The apartments are well enough, and spacious for a captive; greater splendour would not reconcile me to the means which have been so harshly taken to deprive me of my liberty. I am sure you will feel the propriety of relinquishing the claim to a guardianship which is neither acknowledged by me, nor legal; and generously relieve yourself of an unwilling guest.”

“Pardon me, fair cousin, I am your nearest relation, therefore the duty you are

so prompt to deny devolves on me;—your withdrawal from the asylum I had provided for you, unsanctioned by my permission, is, you must acknowledge, a justification of the measures which I have taken to restore you to my protection.”

“The dread of the violence I have now experienced, Baron, drove me from that happy asylum.”

“I fear, lady cousin, if such are your sentiments, the freedom which I came to offer from the more strict confinement of these apartments, must, for the present, be postponed; and I must rather seek you here, than hazard a second flight to wander over the country, with low mechanics—a vagrancy unbecoming your station, and the dowry I propose to bestow with your hand.”

“As you please, sir,” replied Clotilda coolly, “I shall claim no more from you than my inheritance, which will need no

addition, and I am fully prepared to treat you with the respect due to our difference of age, our relationship, and the regard in which I am told my parents held you; at the same time I am sure your sense of decorum will point out to you, that, prisoner as I am, lengthened visits may give rise to a false interpretation."

Clotilda felt that she hazarded much by giving this hint for his departure, but it was evident that it was not his intention to press his suit at that moment; and as what she uttered was spoken in a calm tone, it might induce him to hope, that by not forbidding his visits altogether, time, and a respectful deference to her, might soften her feelings towards him; and thus she might postpone the evil hour: and such indeed was the effect of her manner, for he was too much absorbed in his own schemes to fathom those of others; and never for a moment conceived that a girl reared in seclusion

could dive into his character, or attempt to thwart his plans by any other means than those of escape. He supposed that possibly his portrait had been sketched to her in dark colours, he wished to obliterate such unfavourable lines, by filling up the picture with gaudy tints which might deceive her inexperience.—He soon rose to take his leave.

Ludwig took an opportunity of requesting that some other might be appointed to attend upon the ladies. “It was,” he said, “an irksome office, for his services were thanklessly received, and he got only sullen looks and short answers for his pains.”

“I should have thought,” said the Baron, “that the bright eyes of the miller’s daughter would have rewarded you for the office of gaoler; if I had not higher game in view, I should take some pains to win or force her favour.”

The epithet of “villain” nearly escaped

Ludwig's lips. "Of the first," he replied, "there is little chance, and I am sure the Baron von Reiterstein would deal vengeance upon me, if I were to attempt the latter."

The Baron looked at him searchingly, but Ludwig appeared as if he was serious, and believed what he said.

"Till I find some one more fitting to take your duty, Ludwig, you will perform it yourself."

Ludwig pretended to look sulky; and the Baron left him to the enjoyment of his successful ruse. When he took the supper to his captives, he briefly stated what had passed. Schwartz did not return, and Ludwig rejoiced at his absence.

The Baron continued his visits daily, and used every art of apparent kindness and flattery to win a more gracious reception from the cold and stately Clotilda,—but the same calm and distant manner re-

mained unchanged during each succeeding interview. Time pressed ; he had already over-stepped the day on which he had engaged with Maurice to return to the camp ; but he was resolved to secure Clotilda's hand before he quitted Reiterstein ; he saw, and felt, that all his efforts to procure a willing consent were likely to fail, and decided without further hesitation or delay, to announce his commands, if persuasion would not avail.—Ludwig did not remain in ignorance of the coming storm, but as we have said, he was determined to save Clotilda from the fate which awaited her, even at the hazard of his life. He was ordered by the Baron to have the long disused chapel in readiness, to take with him that evening an escort, capture or bribe some priest, and bring him to the Castle ; the alacrity with which he undertook these commissions deceived the Baron,

who believed he would be glad to be freed from his attendance on his prisoners.

Clotilda was prepared by the young soldier for the trial which awaited her ; but appealed to that Eternal Being whose arm of power can be stretched to save when all human hope has fled, to spare her from the horror of the coming hour.

The difficulty was to gain access to the chapel ;—but after a long search the key was found. Ludwig had visited Hilda some hours previously, and gained intelligence from Schramm, who by this time had arrived there, which guided his further proceedings ; he selected four of the best soldiers from the thirteen now at the Castle, and made his way to the westward towards the road which led to Zwickau.

The night was chilly, and a mist confined the view ; they had ridden briskly across a wide common, and were entering on a road

inclosed on either side, when the word, "surrender," arrested them, and ere it could be repeated or answered, they were surrounded by many horsemen. Some shots were exchanged, and one of Ludwig's companions fell; the others were made prisoners, disarmed, pinioned, bandaged, and led away.

Ludwig held a short parley in whispers with one of the leaders of the party, then returned to the disabled man; he found him endeavouring to rise, and having staunched the wound as well as he was able, and waited a few minutes till the fellow had overcome the giddiness occasioned by the fall, which had stunned him, urged their return to the Castle. "There is no time to be lost," he said; "doubtless they are plunderers; if they return and find the wounded birds flown, they will soon overtake us."

The Baron was pacing the hall in no benign mood, for he had just quitted Clotilda,

from whom he had received a colder reception than usual,—when Ludwig entered.

He observed, “you have sped your errand quickly.”

“And most unfortunately,” replied the other; “we were beset, ere we gained the high road, by a band of men bent on plunder; three of our party are captured, and I have brought home the fourth grievously wounded. I was unhorsed, and they, believing us not likely to give them further trouble, left us as fair prey to the birds.”

“What induces you to believe plunder was their object?”

“Because our doublets underwent as thorough a search, as if they had been stuffed with contraband goods; and because, by their imprecations, I judge they were disappointed in not finding a richer booty;—hang them, they have not left me a kreutzer;

as for my wounded comrade, he had not even so much to lose."

"What were they like?" demanded the Baron.

"Like, Sir Baron? what they were, robbers, armed apparently with every sort of weapon; and scarcely two alike, as far as I had time to judge; for they did not halt in their work. Pitiful fellows! to rob a soldier of a few kreutzers!"

"But the priest,—where is the priest?" cried the Baron impatiently.

"That is more than I can say, for our holy search was cut short. Confound them, they have defrauded some worthy man of a comfortable tankard, a night's lodging, and a fee into the bargain, besides the shriving of our garrison."

"You have mismanaged this business, sirrah, and your head seems to have been as lukewarm in my service as your sword was idle," said the Baron sternly.

Ludwig feigned a stupid astonishment at this accusation.

“Why, Sir Baron, you yourself laid down the route we were to pursue, and the activity of my sword must have multiplied greatly, to parry the attack of twenty desperate robbers.”

“It is enough, sirrah; see that a priest awaits my orders by to-morrow’s sunset, or you shall learn, on the following morning, to die without fighting; hence, and if your memory cannot hold the commission, the penalty for its failure shall render its service useless to you for the future.”

Ludwig retired not a whit intimidated by the threats which had been vituperated against him, and the Baron continued his irregular strides. He wished to woo and win his cousin with her own consent. Her evident disgust at his society wounded his self-love more than harsh words would have done; he could have stormed in return, and

in her resistance have found some excuse for the violence he meditated, or possibly have cajoled her by fair promises and words into a reaction of feeling towards him; but she seemed equally impracticable to all his blandishments, implied threats, or professions of entire devotion. His vanity was mortified at the idea of forcing the woman he fancied he loved, to accept his hand; but there was too much at stake for any motive to induce him longer to delay, or relinquish his object; and if passion and avarice had not urged him on, so unfathomable is the construction of the human mind, he would have persevered in his iniquity, for a thoroughly bad man feels as shy of contradicting the tenor of his former life by a worthy deed, as a virtuous one would be ashamed of losing his reputation, by the commission of a bad one; and thus sin begets sin. He suddenly stopped short in his evolutions—he was not satisfied with Ludwig's account of the

evening's adventure. Krantz's escape occurred to his recollection, but still Schwartz's continued absence bespoke his consciousness of some neglect, and the unembarrassed careless manner of the other told in his favour; he could not but grant, that if he stated truly by what numbers himself and his comrades had been overpowered, there was little use in, or even the possibility of resistance. To satisfy these doubts, he sought the wounded man, who corroborated Ludwig's statement. "He was," he said, "hurt, and stunned at the beginning of the attack, therefore had no time, so unexpected was it, for previous observation." When he recovered his senses, he stated, that Ludwig's horse was on the ground, and the attacking party had ridden off. Better assured of the fidelity of his follower, he returned to the hall, again sent for Ludwig, and demanded his pistols; he had laid them aside, he said, but would fetch them. Brandt was ordered to bring the weapons; they had

both been discharged,—another evidence in Ludwig's favour; a passing thought might cross the Baron's brain, that guilt is the parent of suspicion. An ingenuous mind never suspects in others, the acts it deems impossible, consistently with its own ideas of virtue, and thus it is that deception flourishes, and seeks its victims among the good and honourable, entrapping guileless hearts, and spurning its loathsome venom to soil the most honest intentions.—He now desired Ludwig to announce to Clotilda that he should take supper in her apartment.

As the Baron's suspicions had been aroused, Ludwig was sure that the time he should have in which to tell his news, would be short, and that the Baron would quickly follow his messenger; he rushed on therefore rapidly, and in a few words, told Clotilda not to fear,—aid was at hand; to be upon her guard,—to make no disclosure,—he

would endeavour to explain further in the morning, and then retreated. He met the Baron a few paces only from the door of the apartments ; spite of Ludwig's assurances, her tormentor's presence at that hour terrified the unfortunate Clotilda. She essayed to rise, but sank again into her seat ; her countenance assumed such a death-like hue, that the marble effigies in the chapel, which he had visited that morning, seemed linked in his mind with the half fainting being before him, and a momentary shudder assailed him. Thumelda watched the transitory feeling, and her sparkling eyes spoke hatred and contempt ; she almost wished at that moment, when she witnessed the effect his presence had produced on her beloved companion, that her hand was clasping the dagger intrusted to the keeping of that dear one. The Baron's remorse was too momentary, to leave even a brief memory that it had ever been ; and he commenced his en-

quiries and conversation with his usual composure; he had proposed his company to his cousin, for he felt lonely; his further stay at Reiterstein was impossible, without detriment to his honour; he had matters to communicate of the utmost importance to his future welfare, for which it was necessary to prepare her.

Clotilda emphatically repeated the word, "HONOUR," and relapsed into silence.

"Yes, lady, the honour of a true knight."

"TRUE KNIGHT," again repeated Clotilda almost mechanically, her lips and cheeks still colourless.

The Baron took her cold hand, but his touch appeared to restore the half-suspended faculties of her mind and body; a fiery poison seemed to have been instilled into and was circulating in her veins and brain; never was disgust and abhorrence more unequivocally exemplified without the aid of words or gesture; for she was as tran-

quail as a summer's sea, and even the villain was moved for an instant, by the uncontrolled workings of nature before him.

The only creature who had ever for a moment inspired him with fear, was the helpless being who now sat powerless in his power, and against whose peace he had been plotting for years. The strange control which she held over him, and the mad passion with which she inspired him, were the only safe-guards which shielded her innocent life. It was a relief to him, when Ludwig entered with the attendants, to make arrangements for supper; he hastily ordered him to fill a goblet of wine, which he eagerly quaffed at a draught. Ludwig looked at Clotilda so cheerfully, that by degrees she regained some composure;—the Baron extolled the vintage, and requested his fair cousin to pledge him. She bowed and declined the proffered draught, but Ludwig, handing to her a small cup, ob-

served meaningly: "Fear not, lady, the wine is not so strong as it seems, and I have heard the Baron's guests observe, that it brings *pleasant dreams*." He watched anxiously his lord's repeated libations, and, fearing the frenzy they might produce, upon a fresh demand, coolly replied, "that he must then go for more, for the flask was empty."

Dismissing the attendants, he departed, but did not return; when they were gone, Reiterstein threw off all restraint, and announced to Clotilda his desire that she should prepare to receive him as her husband, pointed out to her the advantage she would derive, penniless as she was, from such an alliance, expressed to her in glowing colours his admiration, and his love, and finally, hazarded the hope that she would accompany him to the chapel on the following evening.

Clotilda fixed her beautiful eyes steadily upon him, and said "you require me, Baron

von Reiterstein, to do an act willingly, to force me to which you have used unjustifiable means ; I never can, or will be your bride, never insult high heaven by mingling unlawful and false vows with yours, at its sacred altar ; you may force me to that sanctuary which contains the mortal remains of my parents, and there immolate a victim of their own blood and ancient race, to the manes of those who sheltered your youth, gave you with unsparing hand the means to keep in honour, and to aggrandize your name ; and wind up the climax of your ingratitude to them by the destruction of their offspring. I have registered vows—vows which heaven and our holy religion hold sacred,—*never* to be your wife ; beware how you press or force a ceremony which will bring vengeance upon your head : you may bar your Castle gates, and line your walls with armed men, commit unhal-
lowed crimes in the dead silence of the

night, and veil them from mortal eyes in the full glare of day under a specious semblance—but, there is ONE whom *you* know not,—ONE who holds not communion with corrupted souls, but to judge and to condemn,—ONE whose omnipresence neither bolts nor deepest dungeon can detain, to whom neither gates nor walls can bar access, who can disharm the armed without a blow, who by a breath can lay millions of the strongest low, and can save the innocent in the utmost hour of peril, who can strike the mighty, and raise the fallen—IT IS HE, to whom *your* knee never bends—IT IS HE, whom *your* heart never acknowledges—IT IS HE who is veiled from *your* mental vision by the darkness of your soul; His all powerful and hallowed name—IS GOD.”

Clotilda’s voice was firm, full and energetic; its rich tones added force to her speech, but her manner was calm, nor did anger bend her open brow; the words fell from

her lips warningly and solemnly ;—a hectic glow lived for a moment on her cheek, then left it as blanched as the snowy mountain which reflects the dying light of the sun ere he sinks to rest.

“’Tis useless, I find,” said the Baron with anger, “to argue with a fanatic ; I would fain win you by gentle methods, and yield to you the homage I have never yet deigned to offer to woman ; I would avoid using the force, which you seem by your mad opposition to covet. Mine you *shall* be, cousin mine, if all the demons of hell conspire to snatch you from me, even at the altar— I neither fear your denunciation, nor am I deterred by your opposition, and if you persevere, when the ceremonies of the church have united us, in such wild and wilful rebellion, a despotic master shall usurp the tender office of a devoted husband ;—think well of this, fair cousin, and spare your apostolic flights for your Confessor’s ear.

We meet to-morrow evening in the chapel; the hour you will learn in time to don your bridal attire, if it suits you so to deck your charms, to meet the happy destiny which awaits you."

He now mockingly bowed, and quitted her presence. Clotilda pressed her hands to her pale brow, for wild confusion was revelling in her brain.

Ludwig talked of aid, what was it? how could he procure it? whence was it to come? if it failed her, dishonour might condemn her to everlasting misery—Thumelda stood watching her in silent alarm, fearing to interrupt too suddenly the current of her thoughts, leaving reason awhile to retrieve its sway she remained almost motionless bending over her; after a few minutes of anxious suspense, for she almost feared for her intellect, she gently took her hand, and softly repeated Ludwig's words.

"Doubt him not, lady," she added, "he

would not have been so barbarous as to mislead us; he has as much cause to hate the oppressor as ourselves, and has he not given you the means to avenge, and save yourself?"

"But MURDER! Thumelda, MURDER!" she cried shuddering; "how can I stain my soul with such a crime? how can a woman's nerveless arm deal the blow surely which an assassin's would not miss?"

"If yours fails you, lady, Ludwig's will aid you."

"And you, my gentle Thumelda, you will equally be the prey of this ferocious animal,—for man he cannot be."

"Never, lady, never! I have been reared to roam more at free will than you, endowed by hardier habits, with greater strength, and he shall never live to compass my disgrace while a weapon is within my reach.

CHAPTER II.

It was now nearly midnight, and still the Baron roamed around the Castle. The mist had settled into rain, which fell heavily, and drove in gusts against his face; in turning an angle, he encountered Ludwig, who said:

“I have been seeking you, Baron; fortune has commanded for you that which I could not compass; a priest an hour since begged shelter for the night at the gast

haus; their only spare apartment was occupied, they could not harbour him, and have sent him here; he also encountered those inspectors of plethoric purses; they detained him for some hours, and set him free not long since; shall I admit him?"

"Yes, fool, why ask you? keep him till his work is done, and if not willingly done, tell him his eternal night's rest shall be spent in company with my ancestors; truly an honourable grave for hood and cowl."

Ludwig left him to provide for the priest's comforts.

We must pass over in silence many hours of the following day; they were spent by Clotilda in restless anxiety, and continual apprehension on her part, and in words of consolation on that of Thumelda's.

"If you doubt," she said, "your power to use that weapon, give it to me; ere he pollutes you by one embrace, it shall do its duty."

“No, no, Thumelda, I will not cast the sin of murder on thy innocent soul, and Heaven grant that I may not be compelled, in the defence of my honour, to resort to such direful means.”

The morning passed, and Ludwig did not appear; each minute accumulated fresh anxiety. The Baron might have discovered the schemes that had been formed for her release; he might have sent him out of the way on some distant mission. An hour after noon, however, brought him to their apartments laden with a package, which, having closed the door, he threw upon the floor.

“Here, lady, I have brought your bridal attire, I need not say, do not put it on, nor Thumelda the fanciful garb the Baron has provided for her. When you are summoned, cover yourselves with these cloaks, remember the red for you, lady, the blue for her; make no resistance when the escort comes to guide you to the chapel; let the priest proceed

with the ceremony, and yield yourselves willingly to those who will rescue you. Take freely the refreshment which I have brought; snatch some repose if possible, and be careful to extinguish your lamp before you quit your apartment; now farewell, I must not be missed longer than to do my errand."

The bowl was now flowing in the hall; Ludwig sat at the head of the board as master of the revels, and sent it round in quick succession; he proposed the healths of the Baron and his bride, and when he found that the deep potations were producing their effect, he ordered the men, whose turn it was to guard the gate, to relieve the soldiers then on duty, and brought the latter to partake in the general intoxication, which was in progress. Having arranged matters thus, he sought the Baron, whom he found in no placable mood, nor with a bridegroom's smile, but nevertheless gorgeously arrayed.

"Wine, Ludwig, wine!" he cried, "I sup-

pose I shall have tears to mix in my bridal cup to-night, and would fain quaff the draught ere it is adulterated. It is time that the chapel were prepared, and my beautiful and willing bride," he added scoffingly, "brought forth; I hope she will not play fantastic airs at the altar."

"I trust not, sir," said Ludwig, "but women are dangerous weapons to play with, they can cut, and wound, and sometimes blunt a man's courage; but the wine, Baron, I will bring it, and hope the cup of matrimony may prove as palatable."

Having done his errand, and filled the cup to the brim, he departed on his way to the chapel, accompanied by the priest. He carefully closed the doors, and throwing a quantity of incense into a concealed brazier, quickly filled the building with dense and overpowering fumes. He placed two guards outside the door, conducted four soldiers to Clotilda's apartment, gave notice to the

Baron that she was on her way, and preceded him with a flambeau.

Reiterstein desired him to await the bride's arrival at the entrance, strode up the aisle, and placed himself at the altar, where the priest was already waiting, whose cowl was not wholly thrown back, and in some measure shaded one side of his face, while a white beard covered his upper lip and chin.

Clotilda walked firmly up to the altar, and stood calmly awaiting the commencement of the ceremony.

"It were better, lady," observed Reiterstein, "to dispense awhile with that unbridal like cloak."

Clotilda shuddered, and said, "*I am cold.*"

The service began, and when the time for her response arrived, and was solemnly demanded, she replied with a firm voice :

"I will never be the bride of the Baron von Reiterstein."

The Baron advanced to seize her hand,

when an armed figure started from behind her father's tomb, and others immediately surrounded the altar. A blow felled him to the earth; Clotilda and her companion were lifted up and borne away, as if by magic; the lights at the altar were overthrown, and the chapel left in total darkness. As the Baron fell, he saw Ludwig laid prostrate at his side. The guards were too much overcome by wine, and by the smoke with which the chapel was now filled, to perceive what was occurring at the altar steps, in time to make any resistance.

The females were carried through many tortuous passages, scarcely believing in their deliverance, until the cold air blew on their faces. Armed men and horses were awaiting them; they were lifted upon two strong jennets, and the party was immediately *en route*. Three or four troopers gradually dropped in, who had been picketed as outposts, to secure the retreat of

the rescuing party. A familiar voice whispered to Clotilda :

“Heaven be praised, you are safe.”

It was Krantz who spoke; he who was apparently the commander, now approached; 'twas he who had seized her from the grasp of the Baron, and had borne her tenderly and carefully to the outlet of the Castle; he did not speak but took his place at her side, and guided with care the steed she rode over every deep rut or rough ground, and Clotilda felt, even in the darkness of the night, that his watchfulness never relaxed. And was there no one to perform the like offices for Thumelda ? assuredly she was equally protected, although Krantz was at the head of the troop, regulating their speed, and directing their way.

A drizzling mist had continued to fall without intermission during the night, and now as the morning began to show some faint gray streaks of light in the east, they

were crossing an uncultivated upland, which afforded not a bush for shelter. As night lifted her dark veil from the earth, the air became keen and piercing, and even the continual exercise could scarcely keep up circulation in the extremities. He who rode by Clotilda's side disengaged himself from his cloak, and carefully wrapped it around her, for the one Ludwig had brought was of fine and light material, not calculated to be impenetrable to the unceasing rain. Krantz now increased their pace to a brisk canter, till they reached a small hovel situated midway upon the waste. It was the same habitation which we have before described to our readers, as the scene of meeting between Krantz and Sir Otho.

Here the party halted, Clotilda was carefully borne in the arms of her faithful guide into the hut, which presented rather an improved appearance since our last visit to it. He removed the wet trappings from her

person, then lifted the helmet from his head, and she found herself pressed to the bosom of her husband.

It is a scarcely possible task, however one may understand, and may have felt them, to pourtray the extremes of joy or sorrow, the overwhelming tide of bliss, or the agonising and hopeless bitterness of grief. There are moments which surpass the utterance of human eloquence.

The soul, that essence inspired by Him who rules and reigns on high, with all its combinations, stretches its infinite, varied, rapid, and intense evolutions beyond the power of those mortal functions with which it is incorporated.

What painting from nature can ever attain nature's perfection, or give the softened yet glowing tints she gives. We are sometimes deceived, because we are willing to be so; and when we lavish praise upon the successful artist, and laud the skill which

ranks him high among his fellow men, we only sing the praise of that power, who thus endowed him, and we feel that he is but as a foil to that creating hand of all things, and can justly claim no higher title than that of imitator. Poets with poets' licence may rhyme of art which rivals nature; but nature knows no rival, and in the display of her beauteous works, yields to man those stores for study, which enable him to reach the pinnacle of fame. Philosophers may promulgate their speculative creeds, and metaphysicians mystify their enquiries into the heart and understanding, analyze and describe the various thoughts, which incessantly circulate through the human brain; but can they lay down certain rules, or enlighten mankind upon all the combinations and mingled feelings which actuate the millions dispersed through different climes, acted upon by varieties of climate, religion, customs, and manners?

No; He alone, He who imparts life and spirit into man, can disentangle this wondrous web; He alone can do all this. Shall we then attempt to describe the happiness that in its wild excess amounted almost to pain, and seemed to hold Clotilda's faculties in abeyance? We may, perhaps, imagine placed in her situation, enduring all she had suffered, snatched in a moment from misery, shame, and death, by the hand most dear, pressed to the bosom of one most fondly loved, to a bosom fraught with every pure and honourable feeling, beating with every soft emotion towards her, to whom he had plighted his true faith; we may imagine, but how can the pen trace faithfully the commingling of all these blissful sensations. The heart may feel, the mind may pass all this in rapid review, but pages would not suffice to pourtray all the intense and varying emotions of that brief space, which found again

these lovely and loving beings rejoined on earth.

Did Konrad look with less affection on Thumelda, or Thumelda's eyes glisten with less true love on Konrad, than they were wont to do when their young hearts first budded into tenderness, when roaming the wild chart, she decked his bonnet with the blooming heath, and he formed garlands of the harebell and wild anemone, with which to crown his little bride?

When the overpowering sensations of these thus re-united ones had in some degree subsided, and the tide of joy flowed in a more tranquil current Clotilda, pressing her husband's hand, demanded why he had concealed his presence from her during their wearisome journey of the night.

"Instinct," she said, "suggested to me that he, who so watchfully and tenderly guided me through the storm and darkness might be my husband; but I did not dare to indulge

in a hope so improbable, although so blissful ; if the obscurity had not favoured your deception, love's quick sight would have penetrated through all disguise."

"My beloved one," replied Otho, "the concealment was neither to my liking nor at my will ; but Krantz insisted that such a temporary privation was better for both than to hazard delay from the violent emotions which such a disclosure must produce, and thereby diminish your nerve and strength for the long journey of the night before us."

She now related to him all she had endured, and perhaps it may be as well in this place to account for her quitting her husband, and undertaking so long a journey into the neighbourhood she had the most reason to avoid.

Otho, as we have seen, was a soldier of fortune ; when he was made prisoner on the day following that on which he had rejoined

Maurice, he could no longer protect his wife, and Father Augustine, knowing the fidelity of Krantz, considered the mill as her safest asylum. He knew that von Reiterstein was absent, and that despatches had been forwarded to engage his service, and to recal him immediately from Italy to join the beseiging army. He had, therefore, no idea of his visiting his own Castle; the monk's object was to remove her to a place of security, before his arrival at the camp. With an escort, therefore, and in the care of a worthy priest, she commenced her journey. It was agreed to dismiss their attendants when they had gained the forest, and for the two to proceed by by-paths to the heath, that her arrival might not be bruited abroad.

A sudden illness seized her protector, and she was compelled to travel on without his guidance. Augustine in despair to find that von Reiterstein had repaired to the

Castle, sought the mill as we have seen, reached it after his departure, and provided for the safety of the child, by intrusting him to the pastor.

On his return to the camp, finding that the Baron had gone to Walsrode in pursuit of Clotilda, he lost no time in taking measures to rescue her in the event of her retreat being discovered. He alone knew the secret pass to the Castle, and had provided Otho with minute directions how to discover it, and, if necessary, to take possession of the fortress, for he was well aware, from his conversation with the miller, how slenderly it was garrisoned.

“This day, my beloved Clotilda,” said Otho, “you must take repose; to-morrow we will continue our journey to Magdeburg, for I wish not to trespass too long on the temporary release which Mansfeldt has so generously granted me.”

“What! back to prison?” cried his wife.

“ Even so, my love, will you not share it with me ?”

“ Do you doubt it, Otho,” she replied reproachfully, “ even if it were the deepest dungeon in the fortress.”

“ And so you shall, my wife, and in the noble Mansfeldt’s treatment of your husband, you will perceive how light has been his personal inconvenience, but the deepest dungeon would have been preferable, could I have been assured of your safety, and that of my beloved child.”

“ Thank heaven !” exclaimed Clotilda, “ that ruthless man cannot even suspect the existence of our precious boy.”

Krantz now entered: he suggested that their conference should be broken up for the present, and that Clotilda and Thumelda, having partaken of such scanty fare as they could offer, should seek some repose.

Schwartz, who dreaded the Baron’s fury,

and was well nigh tired of a commander who was neither liberal nor humane, volunteered with the captured men to enter into Otho's service.

He had been sent back with them and a trooper to the hut, and, according to orders, had formed, from the peat and heath on the waste, a temporary shelter for the men and horses. Krantz and Otho, wrapped in their cloaks, laid themselves down within the door of the hut, leaving Konrad and Schwartz to keep guard till they relieved them.

We left the Baron stunned, and prostrate before the altar he was about to profane, by the blow which felled him to the ground ; Ludwig had preconcerted that, in the event of any miscarriage in the arranged plans, the means should still be in his power to save Clotilda and her companion, and place them in the hands of her liberators. Schramm had provided him with an infusion of narcotic herbs, which

he mixed in the Baron's cup, and which would have taken effect ere he left the chapel. He had partially administered the same potion to the soldiers, and had burned the incense to aid its effects.

These precautions would have rendered them harmless for some hours, and incapable of pursuit: he had also prepared horses for their flight, for the sentinels being reduced to a state of oblivion, there was no one to question or forbid their egress.

After a time he arose from his feigned fall, groped his way to the stable, unsaddled the steeds, and aroused such of the domestics as he had deemed it safe to leave in possession of their faculties. The soldiers whom he had left at the door of, as well as those within the chapel, were in a state of stupid intoxication. The Baron was carried, still senseless, into the Castle, and the leech was summoned. Ludwig described to him the assault, but confessed

that he knew little about it, as he was struck down ere the Baron fell.

“And the women?” said the compounder of drugs.

“Escaped, as I suppose,” said Ludwig.

“Glad of it,” was the reply, “this is a case of too much wine as well as wound.”

“No doubt,” said Ludwig, “I imagine my honoured lord thought nothing would cover the absurdity of matrimony, but the cloak of drunkenness, making one folly stand godfather for the other: he pledged the cup however so frequently that he has escaped pledging himself.”

“How was it, friend, that you were not likewise infected by the contagion? Did the thought of matrimony, though not perpetrated in your own person, sober you?”

“I did not drink,” replied Ludwig; “those sponges who are lying in the chapel imbibed all the liquor; the Baron’s activity in requiring my services here, there, and every

where, as well as their greediness, kept me on my legs, till some of those trespassers knocked them from under me, thinking no doubt, that if I was not drunk, I ought for good fellowship, to have been so. They did not consider it prudent to allow me to stand up in my master's defence, and intended to forestal my intention of laying down my life for him."

"Where is the priest?" demanded his interrogator.

"Why he was sober also, and perchance has walked away to safer quarters, unless these interlopers carried him off, to perform a similar ceremony, or give them absolution by the way, for interrupting one; besides as the Baron assured him a safe conduct to the gibbet, and a snug cell in the chapel vaults, if he did not complete his part of the business, he was not likely to linger in order to claim so tempting a reward."

"You seem," said the leech significantly,

“to have kept at any rate a clear head, though not a firm footing in the business, young man;” then turning away, he again attended to his patient, who remained for some hours in a state of unconsciousness.

If the leech suspected the truth, he kept his own counsel, and as soon as unequivocal symptoms of returning sense exhibited themselves, executed a copious bleeding on his patient, which at an interval of two days he repeated.

Ludwig rejoiced internally, when at the end of a week, he saw the awful Baron still too feeble to take into consideration or execute any decisive measures. He reproached the men for their inebriety, and so effectually worked upon their fears, that they intreated him to conceal from the Baron their true state. This end accomplished, he remained satisfied.

Schramm left the party under the Castle walls, and proceeded to his mother's cottage :

having paid Theresa a visit on the following morning, to relate the success of the undertaking, he again started to overtake the fugitives at the hut, where it was agreed to await his coming.

One may easily imagine the Baron's rage, when he reviewed the defeat of all his plans; it was too intense for expression. He had no doubt that Krantz was the contriver, but how, unperceived, he could have gained the chapel with a body of men, or from whence he had collected them, he was puzzled to fathom.

The sentinels averred, that no one had entered, or had even been seen lurking in the precincts of the Castle. No strangers had passed through the village; he must have been foiled by some one, who had the power, as well as the will to do so, and this reflection maddened him the more. He swore a deadly revenge against the miller and his abettors; he would gladly have immolated

some victim, in order to satiate in part his thirst for vengeance ; but there was no one against whom he could bring suspicion. Ludwig maintained the same careless manner as usual. He had obeyed his orders, he said, to the letter ; he had two wilful women to manage, besides a priest, and though he could not bring them to reason, he had done his best to bring them to the altar.

CHAPTER III.

WITH renovated hopes and lighter hearts, our wanderers, after a day's rest, quitted the hut. The morning was clear and bright; a white frost had crisped the ground, and silvered the brown fern and heath. There was that invigorating freshness in the air, which makes trouble sit lighter on the spirit, and renders joy itself even more buoyant: there was nothing in the bleak scene around them, or perhaps in the prospect of their future fortunes, to account for

the happiness which sprung from their hearts, shone in their eyes, and prompted the gay laugh, but they were again together, and every ill which might have been anticipated in the distance, seemed to fade away. The dreadful incubus under which they had sunk oppressed, was removed, and hope,—that elastic spring of youth, ere the world's disappointments have taught us to mistrust and to despair,—shone brightly in their path, imparting vigour to their minds, and inspiring a happy confidence in coming days; neither was it necessary that reserve should cast her mantle of decorum over the expressions of that affection, by which their young bosoms were animated. They rode apart from the rest, conversing of future plans, and days of hallowed bliss in store for them, and those around most fervently prayed that no blight might wither their contemplated joys.

Schramm had joined them on the previous

night; their party was now sufficient for security, and their march, though rapid, partook not of the nature of a flight. On the evening preceding their arrival at Magdeburg, Schramm pressed forward in search of father Augustine, in order to announce to him their coming: the good man met them on the skirts of the plain, and their happiness was reflected in his venerable countenance.

“My children,” he said, “you have escaped from one prison, it is my task now to lead you to another. The Elector craves your pardon, my daughter, that he cannot offer to you the hospitality he could desire to do, or induce your husband to linger one moment in the camp. I must straightway accompany him within the gates of the city, and into Mansfeldt’s presence; he is responsible to the citizens for all prisoners of note.”

“Believe me, good father,” said Otho, “I

wish not to delay one moment in surrendering myself, but, if possible, I would fain present my prisoner to the good Count and Countess in silken bonds more befitting her, for my poor Clotilda's gear is confined to the homely suit in which you now see her, and even for that she is indebted to our excellent Krantz."

"Let your mind sit lightly on that small evil, my son; your wife's loveliness shall not fail for lack of costly robes to make its due impression."

"And how fares my fellow captive, Duke George, father? I trust I shall find him in a more placable mood."

"Oh! yes, he will receive you with open arms, for with more just reason than in your case, he has turned the eye of jealousy on young Henry!"

"Jealous of me?" cried Otho, "impossible."

"Assuredly, my son, he was."

"Then I can well account," said Otho,

musingly, "for his waywardness towards me."

"He woos unsuccessfully," continued the father, "but will be convinced neither by denial, nor by reason; this wilful behaviour adds much to the annoyances by which Mansfeldt is environed; most willingly would he dismiss him, without ransom or condition, dreading him less as an opponent in the field, than a turbulent inmate; he woos, as he would win a strong defence, by storm, and wearies his noble jailer by continual skirmishes within the garrison. Mathilda keeps him at bay by her pointed jests, which hit, but do not wound too deeply for pardon or for cure; whilst ever and anon, she seeks the sheltering shield of her father and her lover."

"Ah!" sighed Otho, "he feels that he has birth and station to back his suit."

"But not a higher fame than yours, Otho," replied Clotilda, her eyes, as she spoke,

beaming with love and pride upon her husband, "and in accomplishments and knightly chivalry, he must, in comparison with you, sink into obscurity ; for if fame trumpets him truly, he is not skilled in the softer graces which befit a lady's bower."

"Thy love, dear Clotilda, blinds thee to the claims which adventitious rank and wealth will ever assert, even over all the graces, acquirements, or qualities which can adorn a man. Each quartering on George's shield stands proxy in men's eyes for a virtue."

"Let those who think so," she answered, "bow before such ancestral trophies ; the honours of the heart content my humble spirit, they are the emblems which adorn the domestic hearth, when the proud shield hangs rusting in the hall ; the view of its manifold quarterings will not arrest one tear, or turn aside one unkind word. Thine of bland argent is more valued by thy wife,

for although no heraldic symbols are engraven on its polished and fair surface, such are not requisite to designate the only blazonry she values,—truth, honour, love,—and these her heart and reason have long painted there.”

Otho looked fondly on his beauteous wife, and internally gave thanks to Heaven, who had granted to him so pure a spirit to soothe his rugged path through life, and banish his useless regrets.

They were now skirting the camp; he made a halt, and drawing his small party around him, addressed them :

“ My friends, in many a field you have gallantly fought by my side ; we must now part, I hope for a brief period only ; but bear with you my thanks for this last service, which far outweighs all others.”

The men with one accord assured him of their fidelity, and conducted by Konrad, bade adieu to their commander. Accompanied

by the friar and Krantz only, Otho and Clotilda proceeded to the gates of Magdeburg; here Krantz was to leave them; Thumelda's tears fell fast; she had a thousand cautions to give him with fond remembrances to her mother. She entreated that he would avoid any encounter with Hartorff, or with the Baron, when he should arrive.

Krantz endeavoured to satisfy her anxieties, and promised, through the father, to give her every information of his proceedings. The gates closed upon them, but how painfully was Otho struck with the change, which a few days had wrought; the listless gait and feeble steps, emaciated figures and pale faces which he encountered, too plainly showed the straits to which the town was now reduced; he regretted the necessity of adding even his female companions to the already famishing numbers, and what might be their fate or their fare? Still from the knowledge which he had glanced of Maurice's cha-

racter, he trusted that he would negotiate a capitulation, rather than storm the town in its present enfeebled state; starved as the appearance of the inhabitants bespoke them, no murmur arose from the pale lips and drooping figures which passed him; he perceived that Clotilda shuddered slightly, as her eyes met these evident signs of want; he deemed it most prudent to be silent, but felt relieved when they were admitted within the fortress.

The monk beckoned to a page who was in attendance, and whispering a few words to him, the youth respectfully requested Clotilda and her companion to follow him; she looked at her husband, but kissing her forehead, he said,—

“ I will join you ere long, my loved one; I must not linger a moment in rendering myself again a prisoner to the noble governor,” and pressing her hand, accompanied by Augustine, he quitted them.

The page then preceded Clotilda and Thumelda through many passages and corridors, and finally conducted them into a suite of apartments, which he told them were destined for their occupation.

“Once again,” said Clotilda, “we are prisoners, but how different the feelings with which I view this second captivity, and how little do exterior circumstances affect us when the heart is assured and at rest;” but even in personal comfort their philosophy did not appear likely to be tested.

A table was spread with refreshments, and in the inner chamber were laid changes of garments, which had evidently been selected by some tasteful female hand. Clotilda was too high-minded to indulge in the petty vice of vanity, but she was not insensible to the necessity and propriety of a becoming outward appearance, nor careless to shine before all others, in her husband’s eyes, and justify him to society for the love

he lavished on her. While in the convent, her dress had been of the simplest kind, though not unbefitting her station.

Ere Otho returned, the soiled and worn garments had been changed, and he beheld his lovely wife radiant in beauty. He gazed with rapture on the fair form before him, on that sweet face beaming with innocence and tenderness for him, and folding her in his arms, he blessed the hour which made her his.

“The Countess is impatient to see you,” he said; “but first I will lay aside this harness, and then conduct you to her presence.”

How elastic was now the step with which he trod those corridors where often he had been wont to pace for hours, meditating in silence with a tortured mind, his fancy darkly portraying every fantastic and mournful image which an enthusiastic spirit could suggest and truly these doleful imaginings had not far outstripped the reality. Buoyant and

light, he now bent his way towards the Countess's apartments, his heart bounding with the anticipated pride and pleasure of presenting his beautiful Clotilda, to those so capable of appreciating her worth and excellence.

They were now passing along the gallery which we have before had occasion to mention; Otho directing her attention to a figure at the further end, whispered to her—

“That is Duke George.”

At this moment the Duke turned: he hesitated for a few seconds, and then advanced, evidently at fault as to who the intruders might be. A few steps, and he was convinced of Otho's identity; a slight embarrassment, combined with a feeling of doubt and perhaps a lingering shade of jealousy, kept him silent for a time; he was aware that Otho had been absent, he had not regretted his departure: his mission he had not inquired into, nor did Mansfeldt

deem it necessary to communicate his reasons for allowing him this unusual indulgence. These mingled thoughts, as they chased each other, gave a varied expression to his features, and a gaze of surprise was added, when his eye caught the beautiful form of her who was leaning on the arm of his former companion.

Otho was the first to break silence.

“I have lately made, as you have probably heard, Duke, a sally from this stronghold, and here is the trophy of my victory; allow me to present a fellow captive in the person of my wife.”

The Duke for a moment looked with some astonishment, and then said gallantly:—

“If the beauty of your prize, Sir Otho, adds proportionate strength to the fortress, the governor may thank you for rendering his Castle impregnable.”

“Mine,” said Otho, pressing Clotilda’s

hand in his own upon his heart, "I have long surrendered."

The Duke's face brightened, and however passionate his admiration was for Mathilda, he could not but confess, that the exquisite being before him was not likely to be dispossessed by any rival. There was an inexpressible grace in all her movements, and her smile, as she bowed acknowledgement for his flattering salutation, conveyed the idea of every sentiment which could bespeak amiability and sincerity: it was a smile so gracious, and so winning, that prepossession rewarded its bestowal; perfect as all her features were, the beauty of her mouth was unequalled, and that lovely smile once seen, could never be forgotten. They parted from the Duke in the gallery, and entered the saloon; the Countess arose and advanced to receive her guest, with that bland kindness which bids welcome more warmly than courtly speech can do. Otho was

grieved to see that the shade of sadness, which too often clouded her brow, was still more deepened and confirmed by added care, and even the gay Mathilda wore a look of anxiety ill suited to the bright days of youth, and more particularly striking in a countenance usually dimpled by mirth, imparting its beams of sunny gladness to all around.

“It may seem ungracious Sir Otho,” said the Countess, “to descant at our first meeting upon unpleasant themes, nor would I do so, and cast an unwelcome shadow on the joyous moments of your reunion, but to apologize to your fair lady for a dull reception, ill befitting the honour she does us, and faintly expressing the pleasure her presence affords us.”

“My obligations, noble lady, to the Count and yourself are too deeply engraven on my heart to need the seal of empty ceremony to stamp their value ; fortune I trust

will grant us the power to wile away some sorrowful moments, rather than load you with an additional source of uneasiness."

"I doubt it not, Sir Otho, and perhaps you will think me selfish, when I confess that I rejoice in the occasion, which yields the society of the lady Clotilda to my dear Mathilda, for in truth her parents are too sorely pressed by melancholy thoughts to chase away, by seeming cheerfulness, the sadness produced by the scenes of suffering which encompass them."

Clotilda's eyes were bent in admiration upon the subject of this discourse, she was far exceeding in beauty all her husband had taught her to expect; she accused him in her own mind, of having played the niggard in his eulogiums.

Surely he could not think so meanly of her, as to fear the hazard of raising a woman's jealousy, by the praise of superior

charms, neither could he imagine it was possible for her to suspect his constancy.

When these questions were afterwards suggested by her to Otho, a simple answer accounted for his slender praise, which had appeared lukewarm to Clotilda; that her image which was ever present to him, cast all others in the shade, and all other beauties in the back ground; if she thought thus of Mathilda, that lovely maiden herself dealt out the full mead of admiration to the elegant creature now presented to her; fortunately, each person has a standard of loveliness of his own; the prejudice of affection may influence the judgment, or flattery may predispose it; habit, manners, and a thousand accidental circumstances often guide, perhaps pervert or mislead the taste, but there are acknowledged rules of beauty, which none can fail to appreciate and admit, although envy may impose silence, when the fear of its detection hushes open

detraction, and such Mathilda felt was the undeniable beauty of her new friend; well could she account for, and sympathize in the misery she had seen Otho suffer during the period of his absence from his wife.

The usual formal barriers of society were broken down at once by the peculiar position in which all parties were placed, and the defensive armour of ceremony was laid aside for the more becoming robe of kindly interest.

Two hours had elapsed unnoticed by the party, when Mansfeldt joined the group; advancing to Otho he said kindly:

“ My duties have detained me longer than I expected—I must thank you for the volunteer whom you have added to our circle; alas! a volunteer to falling fortunes!”

He now drew Mathilda aside, and reluctantly communicated to her the necessity of circumscribing her charities.

“ I grieve to tell you,” he said, “ that the public stores are all but exhausted, and the list of our private ones now remaining, present so meagre a catalogue, that a few days, in spite of all our provident care, will find us destitute of necessary food.”

“ Oh ! my father,” she exclaimed, “ say not so ; What is to become of our hospitals ? What of the poor and sick ? Must they perish miserably ? Shall I see those kind familiar faces who look to me for support, fade and vanish from around me, without the power to save ?” And the kind girl, sinking on her seat, burst into tears.

The Count, who had long before seen the lamentable results of such a lengthened siege, although greatly moved, soothed with manly, but gentle fortitude his sorrowing child, who, thinking little of the privations which must assail her as well as others, felt only for the misery of those dependant upon, and accustomed to her bounty.

“ My child,” he continued, “ we have perhaps forborne too long to reveal to you the real state of affairs, but now we can no longer conceal the painful truth, and would advise you not to witness the increasing distress which you can no longer relieve.”

“ And is there nothing to spare, my father, nothing ?”

“ But little I fear, my love.”

“ But,” she replied, “ words of consolation and sympathy are still in my power, and I will not shrink from discharging a duty which heaven and humanity command.”

“ I should grieve to thwart your good and pious intentions my child ; but I must tax your love and obedience to be circumspect. Disease, the foster child of famine, is adding its inroads to the cruel ravages which starvation is making ; do not expose yourself uselessly, where you cannot aid, or incur the hazard of rendering desolate the home and hearts of your parents.”

Mathilda promised discretion.

When Otho and Clotilda had retired, ere the family party separated for the night, arrangements were made for every possible retrenchment and economy throughout their household. [Many a parent was snatched from the brink of the grave, and many a mother knelt in thanksgiving over the child, saved from death by the self-denying and generous exertions of this amiable girl; but in following up this work of charity, what scenes of horror, suffering, and woe, did not her young eyes and heart encounter; how often were her patience and forbearance taxed by the unavailing repinings of the miserable, and their implied accusations against her noble father and the senate; hints thrown out, that the poor alone were suffering under the pinching pains of scarcity disturbed her, for the uneducated are apt to believe that the resources of the great are

inexhaustible, and that want is unknown to those of gentle blood.

Clotilda was her companion in these visitations, and this labour of mutual Christian duty, although they professed different faiths, linked them in closer friendship.

CHAPTER IV.

KRANTZ, when he had lodged his charges in safety, was anxious to return to his deserted wife and home; he deemed neither secure from the vengeance of the Baron, who would naturally suspect him as the contriver or abettor of his recent discomfiture; but the friar and Konrad would not hear of his stemming his fury alone; Schramm would not desert him; Konrad urged the necessity of bearing him company, but this proposition was over-ruled, and it was

suggested that Hendrick, accompanied by a trooper conveying letters from the Elector to Reiterstein, should join the party. These arrangements were made on the fourth day after their arrival, and the following one was fixed for their departure, provided the Elector would sanction their measures. The father willingly undertook the responsibility of the mission to him, and bent his steps to Maurice's quarters.

“ Well, father,” was his first salutation, “ how fares your gentle ward ?”

“ Thanks to your timely interference, your Highness, safe, and securely lodged in Magdeburg. That noble Mansfeldt deserves not the course of abstinence you compel him to undergo ; his prisoners are the only members of the population in that goodly city who are likely to escape the consuming pangs of famine, and the advancing strides of sickness ; a few more weeks will yield to your forces the maiden city, desolate and

destitute of inhabitants, an easy conquest of stone and mortar, like an inanimate body when the soul has fled, and wherein you will find ample space to lodge your troops when they shall have purified the streets and houses from the infection of the unburied and pestiferous dead.”

“I trust, my good father, that we shall not witness these extremities, and that the professors of my faith, as well as those of yours, will escape such utter extirpation. It rests with Mansfeldt and the Senate to decide their fate; you know well that our conferences have peace for their object. Maurice’s reputation will not be tarnished by his treatment of yon maiden city. So let this rest.”

“’Tis well, my son, the scenes of misery which I witnessed ere I left the town to day have made me somewhat eager to press the matter to a close; besides advices have reached me from Inspruch, which further

demonstrate the necessity of a speedy conclusion to this siege ;” thus saying, the monk delivered a letter to Maurice, which the latter attentively perused, Augustine’s clear eye resting on him the while.

“ This letter backs your argument, father, for prompt measures, and I thank you for the well meant communication, although the matter it contains, or the suspicions suggested to the Emperor of me, are not wholly new to me,”

“ I have provided against them,” he added.

The monk now entered on the object of his errand, and having explained the necessity for Krantz’s security, the Duke replied :

“ I will willingly charge Hendrick with Reiterstein’s recal, but you know, good father, that I do not wish at present to detach this man from my service ; the tool is of base material, so is the crucible which refines our precious metals, retaining

the dross within, while it pours forth the purified ore from its dark bosom ; but let me see this brave man, in whose favour you have said so much ; I shall better judge of his merits and discretion.”

Konrad was sent in search of Krantz ; Maurice, who expected little beyond the air and manners of an honest country boor, was struck by the miller’s apparent consciousness of integrity, and the pure but energetic language, in which he briefly but clearly clothed and delivered his tale. His sentiments of chivalrous gratitude towards his former benefactors, and also to the good father who had been the guide of his youth, and the friend of his maturer age, prepos- sessed the Elector in his favour.

This interview was without witnesses, for Maurice was glad to rid himself on all minor occasions, of his ministers. He knew that treason lurked among them, and that the key of bribery was not wanting to

unlock his most secret transactions to the Emperor ; he found—as many in power have done—that his own bosom was the only safe depository for his thoughts and plans ; he used these officials as his counsellors of state, and in after days, made them his tools to counteract their own treacherous deception.

Maurice, while Krantz was speaking, fixed his keen eye on him, his honest intentions quailed not beneath the searching glance ; when he had concluded, the Prince observed :

“ Reiterstein then claims the allodial lands which are the rightful inheritance of the Lady Clotilda ?”

“ He holds them as his own, your Highness ; the existence of the Lady Clotilda is known only to her husband, the good abbess, our reverend father here, the unhappy man who was the tool of Reiterstein’s villainy, and myself ; the Baron believes

that the abbess and myself alone are privy to her existence, hence his enmity to me, and his desire for my destruction; the miscarriage of our attempt at quitting the mill, disclosed to him my knowledge of his secret, which, before, he believed shrouded by cold-blooded murder."

"And did not your master order some disposal of his property ere he died?"

"His will is in the good father's keeping," replied Krantz, "the Baron knows not for certain that such a deed was executed, that the good monk still lives, or that the man who sank under his murderous hand exists to prove the lady's identity; doubtless the reverend priest has communicated to your Highness the cause for his continuing to possess so long unquestioned lands which are not his."

"He has, friend; and I trust that want of discretion may not cause me to repent the steps which I have taken to further your

views; our country is in too unsettled a state for immediate measures of coercion, in order to force this noble to account for his usurpation and oppressions, but surely he shall some day experience retribution, if he cannot refute the heavy charges urged against him. Your request is granted, farewell."

Then turning to Augustine, he said,—

"Father, I must claim your attention awhile."

Krantz bowed respectfully, and quitted the tent. He had not proceeded far on his way, when a sudden turn brought him in contact with Hartorff; he would fain have passed on, but to allow this quietly, was not the purpose of the other, who was sure that some extraordinary event must have occurred to bring the miller to the seat of war; and he knew, although ignorant of all that had happened, that he was held in detestation by his worthy master, who had

intimated on more than one occasion, a desire to rid himself of the miller. He was puzzled by his unexpected appearance, and determined, if possible, to satisfy his curiosity, and insult the object of his dislike; he stood boldly in his path, and with a leering expression, asked him if he had ground his courage into gunpowder, had taken up the trade of arms, and meant to fire a flash in the pan, in defence of the heretics in Magdeburg.

“I am not a mercenary,” replied Krantz, eyeing him from head to foot, “nor do I trade in courage.”

“But,” rejoined the other, “your business friend, your business? if for the city, you will find in it spare living.”

“Lieutenant, you seem disposed to ask more questions than it suits me to answer; my business is not with you, nor yours to inquire into it, so with your good leave,

stand aside, I have no time to tarry for idle words."

"Or civil ones either, it seems master miller, the cur can snarl who fears to bite."

Krantz then essayed to pass, but the other provokingly dodged him from side to side.

"No more of this lieutenant, I am in haste;" and placing his hand on the hilt of his sword, calmly observed: "you will find my pass word sharper than my snarl."

He moved forward; Hartorff planted his foot across the path, and Krantz had nearly fallen. A shout from the brute upset his equanimity; in a moment he recovered his footing, and swinging round his powerful arm, felled the gaunt lieutenant to the earth.

A shout of "well done," now first informed Krantz that their parley had not been without witnesses, but composedly he passed on, leaving Hartorff to regain an upright

posture, and endure the jeers of those who gathered round. He then proceeded leisurely to his temporary quarters ; he much desired to see Thumelda before his departure, but this could not be ; he decided therefore to leave instructions with Konrad for the father Augustine, to communicate to her his return home.

Schramm had kept within the tent ; and when the miller detailed his inopportune meeting with Hartorff, was glad he had done so ; Konrad snatched a few moments to receive the miller's final instructions, and drawing forth his purse, laid its contents before him, requesting him to deliver to his parents the first fruits of his industry and success ; the kindly pressure of the hand, and the friendly smile, assured the young man, that this filial act was appreciated, it rewarded him for the self-denial he had practised ; he left his early friend with the conviction that he was restored to

his esteem, and the promise that, if possible, he would steal a few moments to bid him adieu ere he departed in the morning. He had passed but a few paces from the tent, when a lurking figure at some distance caught his attention. He was in haste, for the hour was late, and gave little thought to the circumstance. Ere he reached his quarters, however, the person seemed to dodge, and occasionally to follow him; but was soon lost sight of among the tents; he concluded either that he was a stranger taking advantage of his escort, or some loiterer who had kept late vigils. Entering his own small tent, he laid aside his cloak and cap, waiting his dismissal for the night, for Maurice was still engaged in consultation with Count Heideck and Father Augustine.

Krantz, having completed some slight preparations for the morrow, seated himself, ere he extinguished his feeble lamp, at

the rude bench which served as a table. He reflected on all that had passed, the uncertainty of the future, and the probable necessity of his removing from the mill, if the Baron should take up his permanent residence at the Castle ; by degrees he sank into a dreamy state of half sleep, when a light foot-fall and the flickering of the lamp, accompanied by a chilliness creeping over him, aroused him. The folds of the tent had been drawn aside, and Hartorff stood before him, a naked poignard gleaming within an inch of his breast. Krantz started up to parry off the blow, exclaiming "murderer," but he would have been too late, if a sudden convulsion had not seized the villain, and the poignard grazing his doublet, fell to the ground.

Another voice repeated "murderer ;" the wretch tottered from the tent, and with breathless terror, fled till he sank on the ground.

“He believes he has seen a ghost,” observed Schramm coolly.”

“I may truly say,” rejoined the miller, “that I owe my life to your spirit, but how was it, my friend, that your ears were more on the alert in your sleep, than my half waking sense of sound?”

“Why,” replied Schramm, “after the encounter of the morning, I was ill at ease; I suppose that while stealing round the back of the tent, he stumbled over the cords, for a slight noise awoke me; seeing you were drowsy and off your guard, I was on the point of rising, when the villain, looking warily around, entered: perceiving your head resting upon your hands, and that apparently you were asleep, he came straight upon you, ready prepared to strike; I had time only to start up, so rapid had been his movements, for he is an adept at the business, and knows well that in similar deeds, their secure perpetration as well as escape after-

wards depends upon celerity. Whether my gray cloak resembles the one which I wore on the night when he left me for dead in the wood, or that the imperfect light of the lamp flickering in the wind induced him to mistake it for a garment of the grave, I cannot say, but when I arose, and spread my arms above your head, in order to ward off the blow, the dagger dropped from his hand.

They now searched around the tent: foot-marks were upon the frosty grass, but Hartorff was not to be seen in its precincts.

“There is no chance of his return,” said Schramm; “I have had rest since sun down, ’tis now near the hour of one; I will watch till the dawn, when we must be stirring.”

Ere day broke, Konrad’s cheerful voice aroused the miller, Schramm had already

recounted to him the tale of Hartorff's murderous attack. Konrad related that he had met Hendrick on his way, who reported that the Baron's lieutenant had been found stretched on the ground by the relief guard passing to their posts; they judged from his incoherent manner that he was drunk, and had carried him to his tent. Konrad did not doubt that the assassin was he who had dodged him the night before, and whom from the darkness and distance he did not recognize, his object being to assure himself that Krantz was alone and unguarded; the poignard was given to Konrad, and the friends parted.

As they rode onwards the miller observed:—

“Friend Schramm, I have been thinking that the spiritual characters which you have of late enacted as priest and ghost, may be serviceable to keep these assassins

in awe ; they are not like able artists who love to contemplate their own works ; they have been bungling performances, it is true they are modest and unwilling to pass them in review.’

CHAPTER V.

THE fourth day of their travel had closed ere they arrived on the chart; Krantz, becoming still more anxious as he approached his loved home, pushed on in advance, and had ridden about two miles, when a faint cry seemed borne to him on the wind; this wail, added to the forebodings which for some days had haunted him, caused him to increase considerably his speed; he faintly discerned two figures in the distance, who were passing towards a ravine, at right angles with the way he was pursuing, and in a direct line from the mill; he spurred on

rapidly, apprehending some direful evil, when Theresa's voice, in accents of the most bitter distress, reached his ear.

"My son, my son!" she cried. She was in the grasp of a man, and struggling to escape back to the mill.

Ere the cry could be repeated, the miller was close upon them, and his sword poised in preparation to sever the arm of the ravisher who was thus forcibly bearing his wife onward; but at that moment Theresa, exhausted by her efforts and her anguish, fell between them to the ground; before the miller could make a thrust at him, his adversary's pistol was pointed at his head, and the words:

"Hold, or I will fire, she shall not be harmed," discovered to him the voice of Ludwig.

"In heaven's name, what is this?" exclaimed Krantz.

"Fly," shouted Ludwig, "and if you

have aid at hand, save your son from death, and your house from the flames.”

“Fire your pistol,” cried Krantz, “those with me will hasten at the signal.”

Ludwig did as he was bid, then stooping down, he raised Theresa, and bore her to the shelter of the ravine. Krantz galloped to the mill,—the door was open,—a man was running forth brandishing a blazing brand; he rode at him, and struck him down, then jumped from his horse, and rushed with his drawn sword into the house; blood was on the floor; and Carl lay extended, gashed and lifeless in the slimy pool, Gantz was manfully struggling with two men, while poor old Schultz lay bound and groaning at their feet, and his son, fainting from loss of blood, was feebly warding off the attacks of the Baron and two of his followers, his back was against the wall, and the youth was fast sinking under the unequal struggle, when his father entered.

“Villains!” exclaimed the miller in an ungovernable rage, and at one blow he severed the hand from the fellow, whose sword was at the breast of his boy.

At this moment Gantz fell with a groan, a pistol shot had passed through his arm, and those who had been contending with him arranged themselves on the Baron’s side.

Krantz had now four stout adversaries to deal with; adroitly he parried their blows, but, powerful as he was, there was little chance for him in such an unequal contest. The Baron pressed on to the fainting youth, and a second time his sword threatened him with instant death; with a desperate effort Krantz freed himself from his opponents, and struck the weapon from Reiterstein’s grasp, but a poniard replaced the loss; those from behind now clutched his arms, and the Baron only paused to satiate his vengeance with the sight of the miller’s agony, ere he plunged the dagger to drink deep his life’s blood.

“My father ! my father ! spare my father !” exclaimed young Philip, as he sank down senseless ; but at this moment Krantz was freed from the gripe of the men who pinioned him, and a heavy fall announced that one of the troopers at least was down.

They were now man to man, for Ludwig’s signal had had the desired effect, causing Hendrick and his companions to hasten on to the mill at their utmost speed. The Baron had recovered his sword, and retreated a few steps to regain space for action, but Krantz closed on him, a fierce struggle ensued, the sword was again wrenched from Reiterstein’s hand, with a violent effort he freed himself from his assailant, snatched a pistol from his belt, and raised it to the miller’s face ; his finger was on the trigger, when Schramm stood before him ; blood was on him, his features were rigid and ghastly ; the pistol fell from the murderer’s nerveless hand, and he gasped with terror, Schramm

remained motionless, with his eyes glaring on him.

“ Fiend, fiend !” wildly cried the noble, “ back to thy charnel house.”

Schramm moved not, but uttered in hollow and deliberate accents :

“ Never, till thy vile body shall be a prey to worms, and thy perjured soul sent to its last account ; the grave alone shall free thee from my presence.”

The miller had the Baron now in his power, for the superstitious fears of his followers had been aroused by Schramm’s ghastly appearance ; his threatening words, in answer to their commander’s adjuration, and that commander’s evident conscience-struck terror at the sight of the spectre before him, had so completely bewildered them, that they rushed headlong from the cottage. The Baron was now at the mercy of those whom he came to destroy, and Krantz’s arm was uplifted to deal out a

just punishment upon the awed and defenceless villain before him ; while revenge was whirling through his brain, powerful passions were stirring for empire in his bosom, and thought succeeded thought as rapidly as rays of light are emitted from the glorious orb on high. If a ray of heavenly mercy had not passed quickly into Krantz's soul, and illuminated the waywardness of his mortal nature, the Baron in that hour would have paid the just and deserved forfeit of his manifold enormities.

“ If I spare him,” said Krantz mentally, “ it will be to do others and myself in future some cruel wrong ; his crimes deserve the retribution he has provoked, and which it is in my power to hurl upon him ;” he turned his head, there lay his boy, his first born and cherished son, borne to the earth by his adversary's fierce hand, weltering in his blood, cut off as he believed, in the spring of youth and hope, and his faithful servants

slain around him ; again he was in the act to rid himself of such a monster, and strike the deadly blow, which would relieve him and all he held dear from his future persecutions. His glaring eye, and stern look of determination, bespoke the Baron's doom, but ere his arm had sealed it, Christian mercy whispered, "Is it for me to usurp God's condemnation, and burthen myself hereafter with a doubt whether I was justified in constituting myself the instrument of his wrath, in launching the fiat of death at the cowed monster before me?" He stood irresolute, Schramm now slowly retreated, the Baron recovered from his panic, and finding himself completely abandoned by his men, bent his thoughts on escape, for resistance was useless. At this moment Ludwig forced his way into the midst of the group, calling loudly :

“ Save yourself, Baron ! the villagers,

attracted by the flames which are demolishing the out-houses, are hastening up the hill, and may take summary vengeance upon the instigators of the conflagration."

With a sudden dart, the Baron sprung forward, and fled to the spot where he had stationed a trooper with the horses; discomfited and furious, he regained in safety his robber's nest. The red glare from the flames rendered the horrors by which Krantz was surrounded more appalling; the house and mill were threatened with destruction.

Notwithstanding all Ludwig's injunctions, Theresa left her place of concealment, and arrived breathless and dismayed at the scene of fire and slaughter. She threw herself on her knees beside her senseless boy; life was not extinct, hope gave her energy.

"Leave him with me, Krantz," she cried, "and save us if possible from the devouring element which menaces us."

Ludwig, after he had encountered Krantz

near the ravine and had deposited Theresa, galloped to the village to arouse its inmates, for he was aware of the Baron's determination to level the mill to the ground. Assistance was soon at hand, and the communicating barns were pulled down, but what a scene of horror was displayed! Theresa kneeling by the side of her apparently dying child, the floor strewn with the wounded men, and their emblems of strife dabbled in blood, the crackling of the flames whose vivid glare flared upon the pale and death-like forms around. The miserable Theresa, whose peaceful life had been spent in the interchange of mutual endearing duties far from the storms of strife and horror like the present, was nearly paralyzed; but a mother's love inspires true heroism; she arose and quickly unbound the aged Schultz, cut the garments from the unconscious youth, bathed and bound his wounds. She found that his pulse still beat, though feebly, and cried: "he lives!

he lives !” Assisted by Schultz, she brought a mattress, and they bore him to the inner chamber ; “there are others who require our care, Schultz, our faithful men have fallen in our defence,” and here poor Theresa’s duty and affection were at variance.

She feared to leave her dear Philip, lest, during her absence, the ebbing pulse of life should cease to beat. Gratitude bade her not lose a moment in succouring those equally in need of her judicious care. Catherine was not to be found ; she had fled at the commencement of the fray, and all the others were assisting to stay the flames.

Schultz, however, left the house to seek if any one could be spared from the many now assembled ; the fire was still raging, but there was no longer any fear that the furious element would reach either the cottage or the mill. Ludwig had snatched Catherine from one of the burning sheds in which she

had concealed herself; having placed her in safety, he accompanied Schultz back to the house.

Carl seemed to demand their first attention, but he lay so pallid and motionless, that Theresa cried :

“Alas ! death hath stanchèd his wounds ;” and they were passing on to Gantz.

“He is not dead,” said the latter ; “ I heard him groan anon.”

A few drops of blood trickling from a wound in the head confirmed his words ; Ludwig and Schultz lifted him carefully, and carried him into Theresa’s chamber.

“I wish Hilda were here,” said the former ; “ for in truth I am no leech.”

He begged Theresa to attend to Carl, while he supplied her place by Philip. Schultz found Gantz in a less hopeless condition, but suffering great agony ; the ball had passed just above the elbow ; he was assisting him to rise when Krantz stood on

the threshold ; he was besmeared with smoke and dust ; the perspiration stood in large drops upon his forehead ; his stalwart frame was shaken by fatigue and grief ; he looked around, but dreaded to enter ; his boy was not there ; had they removed him in mercy to spare him the sight of his dead body ? but he must know the worst. With desperate effort he entered and essayed to speak ; his words were inarticulate, sorrow staid their utterance ; he leaned against the frame work of the door, and remained powerless to ask the question, the answer to which he dreaded to hear. Schultz saw the anguish of spirit which subdued the fond parent, and said :—

“ Thy son lives, Krantz.”

The miller sank on a seat, while heavy sobs somewhat relieved his agony ; “ Theresa is with Carl, and Ludwig watches your son ; we want more assistance.”

Krantz stole gently to his son’s bedside, a few low cheering words from the patient

were drops of balm to the poor father's heart, and he threw himself on his knees in thanksgiving to Him who had turned from him this dreaded cup of bitterness. A few whispered sentences from Ludwig, and the latter quitted the chamber; addressing Schultz he said:—

“Attend, my friend, to my unfortunate companions, they did the bidding of him whom they had bound themselves to obey; be careful of them I entreat you.”

After giving this charge, he departed quickly for Hilda's cottage, he found the poor old woman up, for she had been disturbed from her humble pallet by those who had passed her cottage on their way to the mill, reporting that it was on fire; particulars they could give her not, and were in too much haste, to assist the family of their good neighbour, to tarry for reply to her garrulous enquiries.

She believed the miller to be absent, and

did not doubt that this conflagration was the barbarous work of the bad Baron. Such scenes were but too frequent in these times, when the nobles could outrage and afflict their peasants with impunity.

Ludwig found her venting her sorrow in tears and lamentations.

“ Alack ! alack ! my boy,” were her first words as he entered, “ I trust thou hast had no hand in this cruel work.”

“ Ask no questions mother, but get your cloak and staff, and come with me to the mill.”

“ Alas ! what can I do, boy ?”

“ Much, mother, as you once did for me ; mend some broken heads and direful cuts ; come cheer up, we must not tarry.”

“ What needs there, my son ?”

“ Healing herbs and restoratives,” he replied ; “ let me help you to gather such simples as you may require, and quickly.”

“ Do not flurry me, Ludwig, my head is

feeble like my limbs, and will not keep pace thy young energies: hand me that basket from the peg behind the door."

Hilda packed sundry dry herbs in her basket, collected a few more from her small plot of garden, and was soon ready to accompany her grandson, who rather carried than supported her up the steep acclivity. Even with his assistance, the poor old woman flagged, and every now and then was obliged to pause.

Ludwig, when he emerged from the road, which in places was bordered on either side by high banks cut through the steep where it was too precipitous for beasts of burthen to clamber, and had gained the summit, perceived that the flames were got under. He was preceding Hilda, in order to prepare Theresa for her arrival, when he found himself suddenly surrounded by those whom the good miller's misfortune had congregated on the spot. They had long borne, but groaned

under the Baron's exactions and oppressions. This open and ferocious attack on the man whom they all respected, had rendered them reckless of any consequences which might accrue to themselves, they knew that Ludwig was one of his followers, and though less objectionable to them than the others, they conceived that he was associated with his master in the atrocity which had been perpetrated, and gathering around him cried out :—

“Down with him !”

“Throw him,” cried one, “on the burning ruins.”

“Let him perish,” vociferated another, “on his own bonfire.”

In vain Ludwig tried to undeceive them, or to be heard.

“Stand back,” he cried, “I will slay the first man who lays hands on me.”

“Heed him not ! heed him not !” roared several voices.

“Advance a step, brawlers!” exclaimed Ludwig, “and I will fire on you.”

Poor Hilda was now near enough, to see the danger of her beloved grandson; she was too feeble to be heard amidst the din of contending voices, but tottered into the cottage, crying:—

“Save him! save him! they will murder my innocent boy.”

In the stillness of Philip’s chamber, where watched the anxious father, these accents of distress and the tumult without reached his ears and alarmed him. In an instant he was among the well meaning but mistaken villagers. Ludwig had been seized; they were struggling with, and forcing him towards the still glowing embers, when Krantz stopped their passage and their purpose.

“No no, master miller,” they cried, “he deserves death.”

Parley was vain with the infuriated peo-

ple; Krantz's words of pacification fell unheeded by the throng; he manfully assisted Ludwig to free himself, and having placed a few paces between the assailants and themselves—

“Hold back!” he said, “you seek the life of a man who has done me no wrong.”

“He has, he has,” cried they; “he fired the barns.”

“’Tis false!” exclaimed the miller, “he has mainly been the cause to save me and mine; I will strike to the earth the man who again attempts to lay hands on him. Do not, my friends, force me, by injustice and violence, to be ungrateful for the services you have rendered to me this night; great as they are, they do not equal what this youth hath done for me.”

“What did he here at this time, sneaking among us?” they replied.

“He had been to seek old Hilda's aid for my dying son; go, I pray you, and watch

awhile, till my premises are safe from any further out-break of the fire.”

This request turned the attention of his over zealous friends, and he retreated with Ludwig to the house.

The remnant of the night was consumed in care for the wounded; Gantz’s hurt, though apparently more slight, proved the most troublesome to deal with, and puzzled even old Hilda’s skill, for a part of his doublet was buried in the wound.

As the morning dawned, Krantz assembled his neighbours, and distributing some refreshment, dismissed them with grateful thanks for their effectual assistance. With the aid of Schramm and of Catherine—who, although still scared, had somewhat recovered from her panic—order had been restored within their cottage. Schramm reported the granary safe, but there was loss enough incurred to render the miller, who had never been a rich man, a very poor one; redoubled

industry, he trusted, would in time repair the damage; if his boy's life were spared, he felt that he should be ungrateful to murmur. Philip's wounds were many, but a good constitution and docile temper, he hoped would assist nature and enable him to support the struggle. Theresa now entreated her husband to rest.

“No, no, my good wife, that I cannot do; when I have freed myself from this poisonous smoke, I shall need no more than a crust of bread and a cup of water; I must not venture on better fare until I am more at ease. I fear, my wife, that this night's outrage will reduce us to beggary, but let us submit humbly to this dispensation, which doubtless for some wise purpose, hath been permitted to overtake us, and meekly offer supplications to Him, who alone can raise us from this sorrow.”

Ludwig now proposed—accompanied by Hendrick and the troopers—to present him

self to the Baron, and account as best he could, for his absence, as well as to devise means for the removal of his wounded companions.

The Baron, careless for the safety of his followers, had ordered the fellow, who had charge of the cattle while he carried on his operations against the peaceful inhabitants of the mill, to lead Ludwig's animal with the rest to the Castle ; he was, therefore to follow Hendrick and the trooper on foot ; the honest miller, even in the midst of his own distresses, caused a substantial breakfast to be set before them.

After their departure, Ludwig lingered behind ; his countenance was troubled, his vivacity was gone, his thoughts appeared distracted.

“What ails you, my son ?” said Schramm, “it is not usual to see you thus cast down.”

“Alas ! father, I can bear this thralldom

no longer ; to be the abettor of such a villain, to wear the appearance of attachment to the man I now hate, to partake the scandal and enmity his disreputable notoriety brings upon him, to be ever on the watch to counteract his plans of wickedness ;” indeed, said Ludwig, with increasing energy, “ I can no longer endure it ; but for your timely interference, Herr Krantz, should I not, last night, have forfeited my life, and experienced a death of torture, as a supposed participator in his barbarous scheme of murder and destruction ?”

“ My son,” replied Schramm, “ I grant all you say ; alas ! my poor boy, it is not for the Baron you pay this forfeit, but for the crimes and follies of your wretched father’s sinful youth. Had I pursued the course of virtue in which I was reared, governed the passions which assailed me, and which were my first tempters to error, as they generally are, I should not have yielded to his guile-

ful snares, or involved myself and you in this labyrinth of woe; it is your parent, your tardily repentant parent, on whom your just reproaches should light; well have I deserved them.”

Schramm's slight frame was shaken by these self-accusing recollections; a broken spirit was held in that frail tenement of clay.

“Oh! I meant not this, my father; surely my words bore no such construction; but I would fain fly from this hardened destroyer.”

“Repentance, Schramm” said Krantz, “and the strenuous endeavours you have used to make amends for former errors, my friend, demand human compassion and forgiveness, and I trust pardon hereafter. Your son I am sure will not rashly quit a service, hateful as it may be to him, which enables him to counteract the Baron's machinations. Reflect, young man, on the

service it has been in your power already to render, how greatly you have relieved your unhappy father from that load of self-reproach which for years has bowed him down in grief; let this be your consolation for what you have endured, and a spur to your further generous efforts; great as have been his faults, he has suffered a heavy penalty for them by the forfeiture of his earthly happiness; grievous must be that duty which requires atonement in the person of a son, whom he has sought sorrowing since that son's infancy: return, good youth, to your employer, watch his movements as you have done, and Heaven grant that the necessity for such a penance may not be of long duration."

Schramm's distress and beseeching looks gave force to the miller's arguments, and Ludwig thoughtfully pursued his way to join the master whom he despised, and

upon whose actions he was at best but a spy.

We may suppose that they found the Baron in no placable mood; a spell seemed to frustrate all his purposes, and ever thwart his revenge.

His first salutation to Ludwig, was: "Coward! why did you desert me? miscreant!" and he advanced to strike him, when Hendrick interposed.

"Forbear, Baron, I am the bearer of despatches from the Elector; I have already witnessed more bloodshed and violence than it will please him to hear of; your follower here narrowly escaped last night from the fury of the people, and from the flames which were kindled by your command upon the premises of a free man: two of your people lie dangerously wounded at the mill, and are indebted to its Christian inmates for their lives, if they be spared; you must send a litter to convey them

hither, for you have deprived the miller of the power to afford them the shelter and assistance their state demands."

Hendrick now delivered the packets with which he was charged.

"You may go sir," said the Baron haughtily, "I shall not require your further service, nor do I take it well that Duke Maurice should send spies to overlook the chastisement I choose to bestow upon my vassals and retainers."

"With all due respect, Baron, I am here to do my duty ; the Elector charged me to await your pleasure, and to accompany you back to the camp ; doubtless, he thought the additional escort would be in accordance with your wishes, but I cannot depart from his express commands ; I must abide here until your departure."

Hendrick retired, and Ludwig followed, his bosom burning with anger ; he was glad to escape from Reiterstein's presence, for he

felt that he should no longer retain command over his exasperated feelings, if the Baron again assailed him. Litters were despatched to the mill for the disabled troopers, and on the morrow, the Baron once more pursued his way to the camp.

We may suppose, that days elapsed before Philip's state of convalescence gave confirmed hopes to his parents.

The youth had arrived at the mill on the evening before the events which we have narrated took place: his father, who had so materially benefitted by the early instructions which he himself had received, determined that his son should be fitted, if fortune favoured him, for some more distinguished and lucrative pursuit than had fallen to his own lot; he had therefore sent him to the University of Leipsic; he had profited by the sacrifice his parents had made for him, soberly pursuing his studies, and now for the first time, returning for a few

weeks to a home which was coupled in his mind with the fondest recollections, and to parents whom his heart yearned to embrace, though it seemed as if he had reached the dwelling of his infancy to meet a violent death and an early grave.

Ere he arrived, Ludwig had put Theresa upon her guard that she might expect some sudden outrage from the disappointed Baron, but he had not been aware, when they left the Castle on the previous evening, of his mischievous intention, for to no one had he mentioned his meditated attack that night on the mill; but for Ludwig's intimation, its peaceful inhabitants would have been found even less prepared than they were, to repel his invasion, and would have been more entirely at his mercy, though truly the word, mercy, as a Christian attribute, he knew not.

Ludwig had determined, when he had placed Theresa in safety, to turn his arms

at all hazards against his vile employer, and fight for those he was called upon to injure. The miller's opportune rencontre with him rendered this open demonstration of his defection from his master unnecessary. The latter was not aware of the active part he had taken to counteract the mischief which he had intended to execute, or the effectual assistance he had given in order to neutralize its effects.

CHAPTER VI.

THE intent of the Elector's consultation with the Father and Count Heideck, was for the latter to meet Mansfeldt on the morrow, in order to arrange terms of accommodation and capitulation. Even at the very early hour of the morning on which Konrad returned, after his brief and farewell visit to Krantz, he found the Prince had risen, notwithstanding his late vigils. There was a slight shade of displeasure on his

brow, when Konrad, at his summons, presented himself.

“Another time, young man,” he observed, “when business of such import presses, your sense of duty, I trust, will spare me the necessity of reminding you of it, and that you will be at your quarters and station when called upon to perform it.”

Konrad was abashed and remained silent.

“Here are papers,” he continued, “which must be prepared forthwith, if the dissipation of the night has not rendered you unequal to the task, for it is one that requires care and a clear head.”

Konrad stood irresolute, he wished to clear himself to the Duke from the imputation of neglect and dissipation; the latter perceiving his embarrassment, said—

“Enough; I trust this will be my last, as it has been my first cause for reprimand.”

“Pardon me, your Highness,” observed Konrad respectfully, “I would not, even to

clear myself from your displeasure, press upon you my justification, but I should be remiss in my duty, if I permitted you to be pained by supposing your confidence and protection misplaced.”

Konrad then succinctly detailed the occurrences of the night, and in evidence, produced the poniard which Hartorff had dropped. Truth is simple; its own unadorned eloquence stamps the value of its worth: he then continued:—

“Krantz’s relation of this foul attempt upon him detained me some time longer than I expected; although the morning was still young, I did not tarry on my return.”

Maurice felt, perhaps, that he had been somewhat unreasonable, as it was yet hardly on the stroke of six, but his displeasure arose chiefly from the impression that Konrad’s habits were less sober than

his quiet and modest demeanour had led him to expect.

He received the dagger from him, examined it minutely, desired him to make a note of it, with the circumstances which placed it in his possession, and deposit it in a chest containing other weapons.

Konrad proceeded to transcribe the papers, the rough drafts of which Maurice laid before him. While he is diligently pursuing his labours, we will give a brief sketch of the local transactions of this period as far as may be necessary to the development of our story ; for we may not call that history, which deals rather with the confined details of private life, than professes to describe minutely the general political events of that era, which we have taken the liberty of making subservient to our purpose of creating an interest in our readers for our tale of the sixteenth century, although, as far as we have presumed to call in the aid

of the more prominent features of the important historical facts of that period, we have not trenched upon the limits of truth, or perverted the records of those scenes which we have been bold enough to invade for our own assistance. Maurice's schemes were nearly matured, although skill and caution would still be required to ensure ultimate and complete success. He had obtained, with the Emperor's consent, the command of a large army, in a great measure collected together by the headstrong Albert of Brandenburg, augmented by George of Mecklenburg, and further increased by the addition of his own subjects, and those auxiliaries who had engaged in his service. To this army he proposed a further addition, by enlisting those troops who were now defending, but who must speedily evacuate the city of Magdeburg. From the length to which he had drawn out the siege,—for the town had been invested above a year—the Emperor had been insti-

gated by some to doubt his ulterior views. Albert of Brandenburg had been despatched by Maurice, immediately after our mention of him, on a secret mission to the Court of France, to negotiate a treaty of alliance with Henry the Second. This treaty was signed on the fifth of October; the soldiers were becoming alarmingly clamorous for their arrears of pay due from the Emperor; winter was commencing, which must put a stop, for the season, to further active operations, and he was, besides, bent upon the immediate release of his long imprisoned father-in-law, the Landgrave of Hesse.

These combined circumstances rendered Maurice desirous of a pacification; on the other hand, as we have seen, the city was sorely distressed, though it still held out bravely. Heideck had no cause to love Charles the Fifth, who had put him under the ban of the empire; he was deep in Maurice's counsels, an officer of distinguished

merit; he possessed influence, and strenuously advocated more favourable terms for the besieged; he was confidentially empowered to give secret assurances of greater lenity, than the proclaimed stipulations of the capitulation professed to grant; he was privately entrusted with these terms, that the Interim should not be pressed upon the Protestant portion of the inhabitants, their immunities abrogated, their fortifications destroyed, nor their profession of faith interfered with; on the third of November, Heideck was to proceed to join Mansfeldt at a castle near the town, and the secret interview and negotiations which had been for some time carrying forward, were to be brought to a close in this public conference. Prince George, as well as the rest of the prisoners taken during the siege, were to be released without ransom.

When Konrad's labours for the morning were concluded, Maurice, attended by his

officers, rode through the camp, and by those arts he so well knew how to turn to his own advantage, assured to himself the fidelity of such troops, as it was his wish to retain in his own service. The game was hazardous, but his refined intellect and powers of calculation appeared to have anticipated the experience of age ; boldness, tempered by caution, enabled him to execute successfully plans, which a mind more ordinarily constituted, would scarcely have dared to pause upon, even in its private contemplations. Mansfeldt's task to persuade the Senate and citizens to accede to terms, which were apparently most unfavourable to the future security of their city and their religion, would not have been an easy one, but that necessity, and a firm belief in the integrity of him, who had so ably and faithfully defended their walls, and who had been driven out of his own possessions by his adherence to the Protestant cause, in part drove and in

part induced them into compliance. Their confidence in himself and Count Heideck guaranteed the faith of promises which were neither openly stated, nor could be secured by their power of retraction or retaliation hereafter. Perhaps they doubted a prince, the most powerful of the Lutheran party, who had aided to reduce them to their present extremity, but those among them of discernment and reflection justly judged that this apparent hostility had given Maurice the command of an army which would enable him hereafter to support and protect the tenets he professed equally with themselves, and spare them from the calamities by which the Emperor had proposed to punish their obstinacy in rejecting his decrees, and braving his power—a power which it was his ambition to render absolute and despotic; which end could be gained only by enforcing a uniformity of religious faith and tenets throughout the German empire. Many were the meetings of the

senate, and manifold were the discussions among the private citizens and the people, and as numerous the conflicting opinions; some, driven to despair, were willing to hazard all for immediate relief; others feared to trust themselves to the mercy of the Elector, against whom they had issued lampoons and irreverent accusations. The saturnine and the wealthy dreaded the worst; the buoyant and the needy hoped the best; the sick and destitute had lost all hope, and were indifferent, the body and mind being equally borne down to a state of inanity. They all awaited in silence the fiat of their fate, which no rigour could render more desperate, if such were to be the condemnation pronounced by the power of victory; the Catholics exulted in the prospect of receiving into the arms of the mother church their truant brethren, however reluctant their fraternity might be to submit to the maternal embrace; they re-

joined in the contemplated prostration of the city walls, and in the annihilation of the privileged rights of those seceders, who denied submission to the pope's supremacy, and proclaimed their disbelief in the power of absolution and modern miracles; their aspiring hopes were somewhat daunted by the knowledge that he, to whom possession of the town and fortress must shortly be delivered, was supreme over the most powerful of the German states, and that, throughout his extended possessions, the Protestant tenets were not only disseminated, but sanctioned and upheld by his example.

While Maurice spent the intervening days in deliberations, in reviewing the state and strength of his forces, and in preparations, Reiterstein was advancing to the scene of action, in perfect ignorance that his private pursuits had come under the cognizance of the Elector, or that Maurice had exercised any control over them. He had half deter-

mined to state his case, and urge it plausibly before him, but debated whether he should claim Clotilda as his affianced bride, or by denying her identity, establish himself finally in the right of her inheritance ; again we must bear in mind, that the only persons he believed to be aware of her existence, were the Abbess and Krantz ; the former had received her on his word, without further evidence of her birth, and Krantz, he conceived, could not produce any, in support of her claims : the latter would be the safest course, but such a one would not ensure to him possession of her person as well as her lands.

He finally resolved to act as circumstances should arise to dictate, for her disappearance, by aid which he believed beyond Krantz's power to obtain, had puzzled him.

Ludwig had declared that the band, by which he had been assailed, were robbers, and had since expressed his belief that it

was the same party who had obtained access to the Castle; but their leaving it unplundered, abstracting nothing therefrom but his intended bride and her attendant, staggered him in this idea, for where could Krantz have procured a bribe of sufficient amount to buy off their habits of appropriation? that he had any alliance with such predatory characters he had as little reason to believe, since his habits were notoriously honest, peaceful, and industrious, and his absence from his ordinary occupations represented to be rare. Clotilda's seclusion at the convent must have precluded her from forming any connexion without its walls, although the words of the Abbess dwelt upon his memory—that “she had been taken thence by those who had more right to remove her than she had to detain her;” but yet, if there were any in power who took so deep an interest in her, how was it that her only apparent champion was the miller, a man so far be-

neath her in rank, the humble retainer only of her father's house.

Many a long mile was traversed by our noble and astute Baron, wrapped in this labyrinth of pros and cons, leaving him as far from the outlet as those who unwittingly trust themselves without a clue in one of these whirlabouts of man's mechanical contrivance.

On his arrival at the camp, Hendrick took his leave, and, through the officer on guard, reported to the Elector his return, and the arrival of the Baron. Hendrick had been employed as confidential messenger throughout the siege; he had been long in the Duke's service, who knew him to be faithful to his trust, a hardy soldier, unflinching in his duty, literal in executing the orders delivered to him, and devoted to himself.

In the course of an hour Hendrick was summoned to his presence.

“What force does the Baron bring back with him?” he demanded.

“Four men only, your Highness, and a dozen recruits, whom he picked up on the way; he talks largely of increasing his numbers, his lieutenant has not been idle during his absence, many stragglers have joined his troop, and he now counts above five-hundred; they have easy consciences I wot, who take his pay; he should not have the keeping of mine though he were to offer golden ducats for it. War is war; but midnight murder on the defenceless hearth of his own people is not soldier’s fight!”

“How so Hendrick?”

“Why, your Highness, it is well I was sent with your despatches, or the companions with whom I travelled would not have lived to make another journey.”

“Ah!” exclaimed the Duke.

Hendrick then in his own homely language, narrated the substance of the fore-

going chapter; respect for the person before whom he stood, alone restrained the liberty of speech, and comments in which otherwise he would have indulged during the relation of the scene he had so recently witnessed.

“You have done well,” said Maurice, and placing in his hand a purse of golden ducats, he dismissed him.

As soon as the Baron had dismounted, he called to his favourite lieutenant, and was not well pleased to learn that usurious interest by sack or pillage were not likely to reward his service beyond his original compact for raising and providing his troop; the prospect of this profitable and licentious spoliation, this Christian mode adopted for upholding and enforcing by murder, robbery, and rapine, the absurdities, abuses, and falsehoods which had crept into the tenets of Catholicism, and which a more enlightened age was beginning to

discover and expose, had drawn numbers of the dissolute outcasts of society to a scene of action where their licentiousness could be indulged in with impunity, and their barbarity rewarded by spoil. Such persons were welcome to our worthies, and were speedily enrolled; more properly could they have been designated by the name of freebooters than by that of men at arms.

Hartorff communicated the fact of Krantz's appearance in the camp, and was challenged in no temperate terms by his commander, for not having secured this enemy to his plans and hopes either by sword or dagger.

Hartorff finding himself on safe ground, and that if he had succeeded in his attempt, it would have tallied with the Baron's wishes and tactics, for he never suspected him of disapproving the crime, boldly acknowledged his failure, and described the appa-

rently supernatural appearance of Schramm, which had caused the arrest of the blow, he deemed would otherwise have been infallible. The Baron's countenance changed at the recital, and after a pause he observed:—

“ Art certain that thy steel dealt surely with that menial ?”

“ Certain enough,” replied the other, “ for I returned to the spot some three hours after, and then he lay as we left him, as stiff as his staff beside him, and as cold as the ground on which he was lying. I cannot say that I lingered long, nor did I stop to bury the body, I thought the wolves would save me that trouble.”

The Baron now related his exploit at the mill, and could scarcely doubt that the spirit of the man, whom they had murdered in the darkness of the night, had appeared to him,— a conviction anything but consolatory when coupled with Schramm's assurance that his visit did not comprise a leave-taking, and

would be occasionally repeated during the Baron's mortal career.

It was now time to prepare himself to wait upon the Elector, to feel his way and to shape his conduct by the reception which the other might give him ; for he was not sure, should Hendrick be summoned to render his report before the interview, what version he might give of the late affray. He bestowed some pains upon his costume, which was half military, the heavier steel defences being dispensed with. It was the hour when the Elector was accustomed to hold his levée, and Reiterstein found him already surrounded by the principal personages in command under him, attended by his ministers and civil as well as military officers. He was earnestly engaged in conversation at the time of the Baron's arrival ; and although his quick eye immediately perceived him, he did not apparently notice his appearance in the circle. Reiterstein at

last caught his attention, and advancing respectfully saluted him. The Elector slightly acknowledged the salutation, at the same time observing—

“Your return, Baron, to our camp is, I believe, too recent to allow us to suppose that you are in possession of any late occurrences.”

Reiterstein lamented his protracted absence, which his affairs he stated had compelled him to prolong; at the same time he observed, that it was a consolation to find that increased activity of operations since he had quitted the camp, did not give him additional cause to regret his constrained absence.

Maurice bowed haughtily, and Reiterstein saw that in the insolence of his mood he had somewhat overshot his mark, and over-rated the estimation in which the Elector held his future services. With that grace and urbanity which was natural to him, and which he managed with such address

that he bent all men's minds to his will, and attached all who came within his vortex to his cause and person, whatever their dispositions or peculiarities might be, Maurice by turns now addressed those assembled; joined to these attributes he possessed a dignity of demeanour, which even Reiterstein bold, insolent, and crafty as he was, dared not further to invade.

The Elector passed from the tent with his retinue, without deigning him an opportunity of further speech; but there were those in the Duke's household and train who marked the interview, and noted in their memories a circumstance worthy of their consideration, and which, judiciously used, might be turned to further account.

From those officers who remained behind, Hartorff's report that a capitulation was agreed upon, was confirmed; and further, that two companies of infantry were to march into the town on the morrow. Here

then, were positively ended all the hopes which he had formed of enriching himself and troop with the sackage of the costly spoils of the wealthy burghers. There were others as licentious and more needy than himself, who murmured loudly at Maurice's leniency; those were not among the troops commanded in the first instance to take up their quarters in the city: he deemed it more prudent to select veter^{*}ans, upon whose steadiness he could rely, to precede his own occupation of the town.

CHAPTER VII.

A BRIEF but bright November day had run its course ; the camp fires and lights were gradually disappearing ; the watches for the night were set, while Maurice in solitude, and buried in thought paced the confined limits of his tent. His brow was knit ; a half smile of scorn played upon his lip ; then drawing himself to his full height, and expanding his chest, he took a deep breath ; his features relaxed into a more kindly expression,

and passing his hand over his forehead, he strode into the outer tent, and anxiously looked forth. A slight exclamation of impatience escaped him; he lingered for a few moments, raising his cap that the fresh air might blow upon his head, then dropped the drapery which covered the opening, and continued his meditations, the workings of his mind apparently regulating his movements. Suddenly arresting his steps, a signal brought Konrad to his presence.

“Konrad, watch in the outer tent, give me notice of Count Mansfeldt’s approach, and suffer none others than those in his company to enter; bid Hendrick, who is without, keep vigilant guard that there be no eaves-droppers;” and the Elector again sought the retirement of the inner pavilion, and casting himself at full length on a low couch, which was placed beyond a table, he folded his hands over his face, as if to exclude all external objects, even indistinctly

as they were brought out by the imperfect light of the lamp.

“Alas,” sighed he, “is it thus that the commander of thousands, and the ruler of tens of thousands, can find no fitter confidant among his glittering and obsequious court to keep inviolate his counsels and his plans, than this simple youth of humble parentage; no trustier guard to save him from the intrusion of the traitors entertained in his own household than a rough untutored soldier? Is it to live alone in heart and thought among the gaudy throng of those who seek thy smile, and hang upon thy words to raise themselves to fortune and distinction, that thou, Maurice, didst leave the sports of childhood, to study books and practice arms? Was it for this thou didst abandon the joys of youth, and the happiness of domestic peace, which were secured in thy possession, to study man, and learn the arts of policy? Was it for

such solitude of soul, that thou hast plotted, planned, and struggled, for extended empire, burthening thy spring of life with joyless cares of autumn's age? Is not that honest youth, is not that rough soldier happier than thou? Does thy gratified ambition supply the void which loneliness creates? Does it soothe the pang of separation from thy chosen one? With whom mayest thou safely take counsel? With whom darest thou mingle thy thoughts, and find safe haven for them? Darest thou trust thine accredited advisers? and knowing well the betrayers who would enjoy thy confidence, darest thou dismiss them for ever from thy presence? No! no! Maurice, thou art a ruling prince, but still the slave of man! Thine ambition is the rod of thy chastisement. To increase thy power, hast thou not been compelled to bend to thy inferiors in mind, and to aggrandize thy name and state! hast thou not tarnished

it, by usurping the rights of the friends of thy youth? The page of history will couple thy good and evil deeds ; craft and subtilty will be associated in the page wherein thy glory and thy righteous acts for the freedom of thy species shall be recorded ; and all the brighter, higher, nobler emotions of thy soul, shall pass away with thy brief life, unregistered by man, for none will learn by heart thine inmost thoughts, to write,

“ ’Twas thus he felt, ’twas thus he spoke,” and palliate, if not eradicate with friendship’s kindly love, the stain of deeds condemned, though much misjudged. Steep and wearisome is the road to ambition’s giddy neight, and when gained, how cutting keen the wind which whistles o’er its brow, and chills the heart of him who arduously has laboured to its summit.”

The tear moistened his closed eyelid, but chasing the unusal intruder, and scorning

the unbecoming weakness, he started to his feet, and hailed with gladness the approaching steps, which broke the train of his sad reflections, and forced his mind back to its accustomed occupations.

Mansfeldt advanced, followed by Heideck and the friar; and the Elector, in his reception of them, showed no trace that the last half hour had been spent in such bitter self-examination. Konrad lighted the tapers, and selecting various papers from a cabinet, withdrew.

“These, gentlemen,” said the Duke, addressing Mansfeldt and his companions, “are the memoranda and plans; by your advice I must in some measure mature them, and select, under your guidance, such honest burghers for promotion as members of the Senate, as may feel grateful for the preference. We must not scatter the golden grain, and reap a thriftless harvest, but choose a kindly yielding soil for such benefits as we may have to dispense.”

“Your operations, your Highness, against our city,” replied Mansfeldt, “have thinned the numbers of our senators. On this paper you will find the names of those desirous of filling the distinguished vacancies, and who will be fit members to associate with such a venerable body; also of some who claim your gracious consideration for minor offices; emulous to rise in future by such gradation to higher places.”

“And know you aught of these persons, Count?” asked Maurice, thoughtfully.

“Partly from personal knowledge and observation, partly from public report, I can, I believe, sketch you the main points in the characters of these worthies,” replied Mansfeldt.

“Now then, Count,” said Maurice, smiling, “pray favour me with a specimen of your art in delineation. First on the list I see of numerous claimants—by my troth, by its length, the whole population of male

adults seem to be of aspiring character—
John Barmann, what of him ?”

“ He is easily described, Duke ; a common character, selfish, timid and parsimonious, will talk of gratitude while anything is to be gained.”

“ Note this man, Mansfeldt, to be fed with hopes or some inferior charge ; such a fellow will take anything, and will continue faithful only while his greediness remains unsatiated ; but you must stretch your canvass, Count, and sketch the wives, or, wanting these, the females who rule the households, for directly or indirectly they will have some influence in the state ; men’s tempers are often sour in public in proportion as they are fermented on their own hearths.”

“ Your Highness has reason,” replied Mansfeldt, laughing ; “ in the wife of this hedge-weed there is nothing remarkable, save that she possesses a more than common share of cunning, which passes with the world

for prudence ; is called sensible, because too much on her guard to expose her want of ability, smiles and sighs in proper time and place.”

“Wermuth.—Ambitious of distinction, but without exertion to attain it ; his views gratified, he will sink into indolence ; his docile wife will not urge him to sacrifice his love of ease, he will not be troublesome, but do as he is bid.”

“Mark him, Count, for election.”

“Wenderboon.—A plodding man, who labours hard to accomplish small ends, while his wife, the handsomest woman in the city and the vainest, loves baubles, scatters scandal in revenge for good looks or superior fortune, and covers a doubtful reputation by the terror of retaliation from her tongue, which distances truth ; flatter her, and you will secure her influence with her husband.”

“Silversteins.—A conceited fellow, with

some accomplishment, who believes that his own merit alone has worked out the accident of his good fortune ; your Highness's preference will bring such evidence of his value before his fellow citizens, that he will attach himself to your interests, as a reward for your discrimination ; he hath a cousin who does not consider that a partner in the advantages and management of the burgher's house will add either to her dignity or comfort ; he is of a steady age, but still embarrassed to choose among the young and agy, whom his overweaning conceit conceives to be at his disposal, and who he gives out are waiting but the casting of his kerchief, to yield their charms to coming gray hairs and obesity ; his companion is his duplicate in conceit, but with manners less suave with intellect enough for intrigue, but not sense enough to reason upon, or perceive its fallacy, virtue or high mindedness enough to scorn falsehood, or candour enough to

acknowledge merit in others, they are matchless in each other's eyes, but scruple not to deceive each other, I recommend him for his manners."

The Duke nodded assent.

"Schreiber.—A bigot, who would purify the Catholic faith by fire."

"None of these," observed Maurice, turning to Augustine; "we do not wish to give your church the advantage of persecution or rekindle, by the choice of such members our unhappy feuds."

The monk bowed.

"Leitegang.—Just, prudent, invariable. A widower, a man of reflection and cool judgment."

"Elected," cried Maurice.

"He hath a son," continued the Count—"who has no further ambition than the inheritance of his father's virtues, and his father's name."

“Let him share his father’s honours, Count.”

“Biedermann.—A low man originally, but wealthy through his wife, a rich burgher’s daughter; he bows to the dust before any noble who will converse with him, empty, ostentatious atoms.”

“Pass them by, Count; he would do the state no service, but would disgrace the election.”

“Sternbach.—Wild, zealous, enthusiastic, and upright, though poor.”

“We can tame him, Count.”

“Schryberg. — Moody, pompous, but straightforward.”

“A fit man as balance weight to the other.”

“Braunwaldt.—A man who desires to be every where but where he is; to be doing every thing but that which he is about, and would scatter his business, words, and time, over

the habitable globe at the same instant, if in his power."

"Not a German, surely?" observed the Duke.

"I believe his mother to have been a French woman; his wife is his antithesis, heavy and solid, a register of market prices, and a faithful guardian of keys and linen presses."

"Too mercurial for a senator, his impressions too evanescent."

"Schmidt.---An industrious thriving merchant; his wife of mean birth, but bold and ambitious, seeks her superiors as stepping stones to her ambition."

"Enough," cried the Duke yawning, "you are an able artist, Count, your colours fresh, your touches sharp. I need no further proofs of your skill and judgment, I shall leave the blanks still remaining, for you to fill up at your discretion; you are fully aware of my views and wishes, and will

manage that the election shall fall, so as to meet them.”

In two days after this interview and conversation, ere the dawn streaked the east, the camp and city were astir.

Carts, sumpter mules, horses, all laden with provisions, were making frequent passage through the gates. Small craft, similarly burthened, glided down the Elbe, and gladdened the eyes of the population, while the steam from baking houses, fumes from savoury stews and messes, which were preparing in the kitchens of gasthausen and burgher dwellings, gave olfactory evidence that the city was relieved from its long fast. Many of the more wary and wealthy citizens had caused their cellars to be blocked up, depositing therein the silver cups and tankards which were fashioned to receive the juicy stores in these wine vaults; costly articles in many instances were removed to dark and concealed receptacles, not likely

from their obscurity to be discovered by a greedy and riotous soldiery.

Such precautions however against such disorders as the good burghers contemplated and apprehended were unnecessary, for Maurice himself entered the city at the head of his army, and there were none who dared to encroach upon that strict discipline and restraint which he had imperatively commanded, in order to preserve peace in the submitted town.

George of Mecklenberg accompanied by Otho, John Garmers Leben, Livinus, Winterfeldus, Casparnes Flaus, Albert of Shulenberg, John of Droto, and others of rank with numerous prisoners of lower grades, were delivered over to him ransom, free at the gates; after which Maurice amidst the the shouts of the populace, rode slowly onwards; curiously wrought tapestries with gay and various coloured flags, silken streamers, and banners, were suspended or

waved from the windows ; his graceful figure and handsome person, put in motion like a summer breeze, the white kercheifs of the dames and damsels who hailed his approach.

Loud plaudits echoed through the city to welcome him as a deliverer, whom but a few weeks previously they had branded as an apostate and a subvertor of their rights, and who had but narrowly escaped the fate those captives so recently delivered up to him, who had spent many dreary months in bondage and inactivity. All within the city, and numbers from the adjacent country, flocked to see, the hero of Germany. These demonstrations of admiration, were received by the object of them with bland and courteous salutations ; Maurice felt as he leisurely made his progress through the thronged streets, and under the green triumphal arches, which were inscribed with the cardinal virtues in letters of gold, that he was

receiving some compensation for days of care and nights of watchfulness, and that thus far his policy had seconded his ambition. In token of acknowledgement to those, whose bright eyes glistened at his appearance, and whose rosy lips huzzaed him for his leniency, he rode uncovered, his jewelled bonnet in his hand, bestowing graceful bows and winning smiles, which were considered by those whom they greeted, as ample recompenses for so much enthusiasm.

Mansfeldt and Duke George rode on either side of him, while Heideck, his Chancellor Arnoldi, with Henry of Mansfeldt and Otho followed: many officers of his army preceded him, others brought up the rear; nobles, senators, citizens, were assembled and awaited his coming in the market place; heralds, announced by brazen trumpets and accompanied by detachments of foot, and troops of horse, proclaimed his near approach.

The major part of the soldiery filed off for the quarters which were assigned to them, for the short space of their proposed sojourn in the town.

Surveying the scene which now presented itself around and before him, Maurice felt that if at this moment the imperial diadem was encircling his brow, he could scarcely be more exalted or despotic. Crowds occupied every space where a foot could be planted, and filled every loop-hole and window from which a view of his kingly person and retinue could be obtained. The military and civil authorities in their robes of state and office, awaited his fiat for the retention of their privileges and attributes; their brave defenders were dismissed beyond the city walls, while his army tranquilly, and without opposition, took possession of the town and its fortifications, which he at a nod could command to be razed level with the plain on which they stood. It was for

him to elect the members of their councils ; into his hands were delivered the keys of that city, to retain which had cost the blood of so many of its brave defenders, and no inconsiderable portion of that treasure, which, by industry and successful commerce, its inhabitants had amassed ; yet no gloomy doubts at this hour appeared to check the loud acclamations which hailed his arrival among them ; no suspicion that he would forfeit the pledges which—though given in secret through others, and which were not legalized by sign or seal--arose to enfeeble them, or cause distrust that he would now pause to confirm them in public ; his honour and humanity were the foundations on which they built for the security and fulfilment of them. And here, Maurice felt was his true triumph, and his superiority over Charles, the great imperial ruler, who had led kings captive, covering every breach of faith by

his power to trample upon, and set at nought, the laws of honour.

In a short, but generous and gracious speech, in which the Elector confirmed the promises of safety and protection which had before been privately guaranteed to them, he proved that they had judged of him not only well, but wisely. The vacant seats in the Senate were filled up by a judicious election; all hearts were now with him, and by unanimous consent, they took the oaths of fealty to him as their Burgrave; an ancient honour, formerly in possession of the Electors of Saxony, and now in his person restored to his house. The sun was nearly set, ere Duke Maurice and those with him quitted the sumptuous banquet, which followed his inauguration, or he could retire with Mansfeldt and Heideck to the Castle, in order to send off despatches to the Emperor, announcing the final surrender and occupation of Magdeburg; he requested Mansfeldt's

attendance till this duty was performed. We shall leave them for a time, and again beg our readers to excuse historical digressions, which may seem dull and useless to some, but which are too intimately an integral part of our plot to be dispensed with.

CHAPTER VIII.

GEORGE of Mecklenberg, heated by the wine which he had taken at the banquet, was pacing the Castle hall in an irritable mood. By break of day he was to quit the city, and enlist its former defenders in his service, so had the Elector decided; restlessly he awaited the departure of the messenger with despatches, for final speech with the Duke; but his mind was wandering wide from these affairs of state; he was out of humour with himself that he could not

by a single effort, conquer his ill requited affection for Mathilda: vexed with Mansfeldt, who would not break faith with his rival, mad with that rival, and burning to measure swords with him: he was now free, and only debating how he could bring about a quarrel, and humble to the dust the presumptuous youth. There was a daring wilfulness in his nature, which made him cling to the unfounded conceit, that if Henry was out of the way or disgraced, his love would no longer be rejected. He was no wily plotter; on all occasions he trusted to his overbearing energy and his sword; his schemes therefore were as wild as his wishes, and frequently from necessity rejected when half formed. He suddenly paused mid-way in his perambulation, drew his sword, bent it on the marble pavement, until the point of the well tempered weapon nearly touched the hilt, then by a sudden jerk of his arm, brought it up in a straight line from his

sight, and with eye half closed, his head partially thrown back, looked with satisfaction along its polished blade. He cast a glance of defiance towards the coats of mail, numerous shattered and trophied remnants of which decorated the lofty walls, or standing out in whole detail under their several pennons and banners, apparently guarded the massive doors on each side, and filled the piers of the deeply splayed windows. In the pride of his newly recovered freedom he almost forgot that owners were wanting to wield the lances and heavy toledo blades which rested steadily within the empty glaives, or rusted by the iron cuisses, or that voices could not issue from the barred casques of those heroes who formerly wore them, and who had sought protection, while performing miracles of strength and valour, under their links or plates of rivetted stern steel. Long since had these defensive vestments been exchanged for narrow tenements

of stone by the knights who once embodied them, while their spirits had fled to partake a higher immortality than mortal deeds of a world itself but mortal, could bestow.

Leisurely and with a sigh he replaced his treasure within its scabbard, and flung himself impatiently into a seat.

“Why should I not seek her?” he thought; “why should I hang about these courts and halls, liked a lacquey waiting the Duke’s pleasure; and that sanctified fellow Otho, what could possess him to be so chary of the stripling’s life? The stately mother Countess too, she walks like a funeral pageant, and is as cold as Mount Blanc in the month of January; enough to transform the female members of her household into glassy Niobes, and the garrison into frozen statues. Mansfeldt himself watches over the youth as if from a concentration of the ashes of all his heroic ancestors, a phœnix of

chivalry had arisen, although to do the malapert justice, he is brave and daring enough, and seems to think the blood of a Mansfeldt a never failing spring in which valiant knights at pleasure may slake the drought of their thirsty blades ; but the Count seems timorous lest his nephew's handsome face should be blemished by a scar ; mightily would it pleasure me to give the youth a taste of my Damascus steel."

Again the unsheathed sword was in his hand, and sundry cuts and passes, although in empty space, showed that want of practise had not relaxed the muscles of his arm nor diminished its dexterity. A suppressed laugh aroused him from his pastime, and Mathilda, the original provocative to this solo combat, stood before him, leaning on Henry's arm. His face flushed as he lowered his weapon.

"Why Duke," said Mathilda, "are you testing the temper of your bright blade upon

cobwebs, or warding off the attacks of some invisible opponent?"

"Neither, fair lady," he replied, looking at Henry, "I was parleying with my trusty abettor upon my fitness after months of disuetude, to punish usurpers when I should chance to meet with them."

"And should he deny your power, parrying his doubts it appears, by his own cutting arguments and home thrusts. I am but a poor judge of such sharp contests; but in truth," she added good-naturedly, "you seem to be a skilful master of your subject. Your supple companion bends in ready obedience to your hand, and cannot prolong the dispute by sheathing himself in doubt."

"I would uphold your opinion, fair lady, and prove it true, were there any in the Count's household, save himself, worthy of the challenge."

"Your courtesy, sir," replied Henry, his

cheeks mantling, “will, I trust, extend this exception to the noble Count’s male relatives.”

Mathilda pressed Henry’s arm, for she saw the Duke’s aim and humour, and said hastily ; “we may not tarry, sir ; if you will accompany us, we will join my father ; if not, we must quit you, to resume, if to your better liking, your solitary exercise.”

Henry paused, but Mathilda’s beseeching looks, and the Duke’s unsteady-eye, which showed that he had partaken freely of the old Rhenish at the civic banquet, decided him not to notice further the implied taunt, but as he turned to leave the hall, the words :

“Stripling ! coward !” arrested his steps.

“This is too much Mathilda,” and again facing the Duke, he said with some heat ; “Was that also a soliloquy with your weapon Duke, or intended to provoke retort from me ?”

“ You may consider yourself my debtor, if such be your pleasure ; the epithets could not apply to me or my weapon, we have both been too well tried in fight and fray.”

“ But not both equally well tempered it would seem,” replied Henry, hotly.

“ Both at your service, and to master either if you can boy,” said the Duke contemptuously.

Henry’s sword in one moment was flashing in the dim light.

“ Away Mathilda !” he cried hurriedly, “ away !”

“ That I will not,” answered the intrepid, though terrified girl, placing herself between them.

“ Mathilda this must not be, the Duke shall find that he has neither boy to deal with, nor coward to brook unworthy and unprovoked insults.”

Rushing on his opponent, he did not belie his boast.

Mathilda half distracted, called aloud for help. Each clash of their swords that rang through the vaulted roof, echoed a death wound to her heart.

Henry was more cool, and nearly as skilful as his antagonist ; the combat must have ended fatally to one of them, had not a powerful arm and heavy weapon struck down both swords.

“What is this?” cried Count Heideck sternly, “Are these the signs of peace? Are ye knights, to choose a noble maiden as witness and umpire of your intoxicated broils? For shame!”

He pointed to Mathilda, who had sunk senseless on the pavement. Henry rushed to her, exclaiming :

“Believe me Count, the quarrel was not of my seeking, but coward and Mansfeldt shall never be coupled in my presence, while the blood of my house gives impulse to my arm, or I live to claim its honoured name.”

Heideck looked at the Duke with concern.

“I know not the cause of this quarrel, but neither the time, place, nor presence, in which you have prosecuted it, were befitting. From you, Duke, it was due to Count Mansfeldt, rather to have avoided, than to have provoked such fierce discussion with his nephew, and in presence of his daughter; it will be useful to learn to command yourself, as well as your sword.”

The Duke was ready to retort, but Heideck stopped his reply by adding :

“You cannot call me coward, sir, unless you would wish to put it in men’s minds in future, to doubt your word.” You may sheath your weapon, for I shall not cross mine with it further than I have done, to check your intemperance; the Elector awaits you, we will attend to this fair maiden, who seems to be the only victim of your domestic prowess.”

Heideck’s firm and scornful manner, so

well deserved, sobered the jealous Prince whom he had addressed.

He was abashed, and stood for some moments irresolute, then moved slowly towards the end of the hall, paused again, and walking backwards and forwards for some minutes, witnessed Mathilda's recovery, who had been led to a seat.

He was now sensible of his madness and folly; his better nature seconded by his love, prompted him to make some apology for his intemperate conduct. In a few hours he was to quit her and her abode; possibly if he left her in her present state of mind, she would hate him, and future reconciliation or communication be barred from him.

Henry's sword lay where Heideck had arrested the duel: the Duke cast his, which he still retained in his hand, from him; and advancing hesitatingly towards Mathilda, craved her pardon for his hasty choler; he

was, he observed, about to quit her, and would fain bear with him her forgiveness for the terror he had occasioned her, although he had the misfortune to believe that his safety bore no part in her concern.

The Duke's address seemed to complete Mathilda's restoration ; her pale cheek glowed, though her speech was still feeble.

“ You do yourself less than justice Duke, I am grieved that you should thus trespass upon my friendship by such rude shocks ; sap its foundation, and hazard its extinction. I cannot regret that your attack upon my cousin was illtimed, because my presence possibly abbreviated your rash combat, and spared the blood of both ; had he fallen, my heaviest malediction would have rewarded your victory, and detestation have supplanted every sentiment of the respect and regard which you profess to value ; if in your sober reason, you had believed the offensive epithets with which you branded my brave cousin to

be truly applicable, I will do you the justice to think that you would have scorned to measure your strength against his weakness; I treat them as idle words, used to stir up strife, but believing them, as I am confident you did, to be misapplied, they were unworthy of you, as a subterfuge for provocation. You bear with you my wishes that your future career may be unsullied by a repetition of such wanton aggression; farewell."

Mathilda arose, and supported by Count Heideck and Henry, quitted the hall leaving the Duke humbled, mortified, at war with himself, and the world.

"Friendship! in truth, friendship, regard," dropped in slow syllables from his lips. "I ask for wine, she offers me water, it is marvellous that the frigid admonitions of a girl should stir up such a war within me, and send the blood gurgling to my brain,

as if it were a fiery element. The Mansfeldts seem to claim the privilege of usurping my powers of love and hatred; but away with thoughts of them; possibly speech with our politic commander may calm the strife within me."

Lifting up his sword from the pavement, he departed quickly from the scene of his discomfiture.

Before Heideck took leave of his companions, he counselled Mathilda to seek some repose. It was the Elector's intention, he stated, to visit the Countess before he retired for the night, and he would expect her presence. Then taking leave of her for the present, he drew Henry's arm within his own, and proceeding towards the gallery, desired him to explain the cause of quarrel between himself and the hot-headed Duke. He deprecated such encounters, at a time too when coalition and conciliation were neces-

sary among the leaders of the Protestant party. Henry exculpated himself to his auditor, who left him, with a gentle admonition to be more cautious in future.

CHAPTER IX.

As the Duke quitted the hall, Konrad and Thumelda entered from the opposite end. Although the foregoing scene did not occupy more than half an hour, and the evening could hardly be said to have commenced, yet from the advanced season, darkness was fast spreading his murky wings, and gave a sombre appearance to the still life and stern objects around. Like all lovers, unwilling to part, their steps were lingering, while each footfall sounded

through the vast space: a thousand forgotten words were still to be spoken in broken whispers, vows of constancy to be demanded, repeated, and exchanged, and means contrived how tidings of each other might be obtained, for they knew not, but that this might be their last interview, at least for some time.

Thumelda declared that she must depart, but still did not withdraw the gently imprisoned hand; hesitatingly, not reluctantly, she remained. A slight noise startled her, and she looked fearfully around towards the dark shadows thrown forward from the surrounding figures.

“Konrad, I do not like leaving you to watch and wait in this dismal hall.”

Konrad laughed.

“What do you fear, dear Thumelda? you do not surely apprehend that the knights around us will forego their dignity, in order to molest a peaceable civilian? For any

living man I believe I am a match, besides on the eve of such a stirring day, I am not likely to be left long to my lonely meditations; moreover the hour is at hand, when the Duke commanded my attendance here; he is too punctual to leave me long in solitude; but why not remain my pretty coward and give me your doughty protection?"

"Nonsense! quite nonsense," she replied pettishly, "thus men ever joke at women's fears, or I should better say women's precautions: this is a dismal place, and you cannot deny it. I am sorry I did not leave you five minutes since, and punish you beforehand for such idle jesting, and so I ought, if I had heeded my duty, instead of listening to your tender speeches, and persuasions to delay, for it is now past the hour at which I promised the Lady Clotilda to return."

"Pray be not so wrathful with me at our hour of parting, my beloved Thumelda, are

you not in truth my guardian angel? You have given evidence of your courage, more than enough to establish my belief that you possess it, but like a true and loving woman, your fears were more for others than yourself: your kind mistress I am sure, will brook, rather than rebuke, a short delay, especially as your service is for love, not lucre."

"And that, dear Konrad, is just the reason why I am more anxious to perform it; I would not give her cause to suspect that I am negligent, because my service is voluntary, besides from regard for my parents, she honours me rather as a friend."

Konrad pressed fervently the generous delicate minded girl to his bosom: approaching footsteps at last obliged them to bid a hasty adieu to each other. Thumelda tripped lightly towards, and vanished through a side door, while a page bearing a flambeau summoned Konrad to the Duke's

antichamber to receive the despatches of which Hendrick was to be the bearer.

The last gleam of the receding torch still threw its feeble rays athwart the pavement, when a dark figure emerged from behind a trophy composed of various implements of war, which surrounded the mailed effigy of the great Emperor Otho the First, and which occupied the centre of one side of the hall. With stealthy steps he advanced to the door by which Konrad and the page had made their exit, and watched them out of hearing, then returned and opened the one through which Thumelda had disappeared. He seemed irresolute whether to prosecute his search, when voices at the entrance and the clatter of steeds in the court without, obliged him hastily to seek his former retreat. As he did so, Hendrick booted and spurred for travel, and accompanied by three troopers, strode on through the heavy arched door which, studded with iron bolts,

lay back on its massive hinges. Lacqueys followed them, and planted torches in the various sockets designed for that purpose; others at the same time placing a flagon, horn cups, and cold viands on the large oaken table which partly ran along the lower end near the entrance.

“Come, quick !” said Hendrick, glancing his eye around, “we have been on duty all day, and shall have hard riding before midnight; a pull at this goodly flagon, and a cut at the boar’s head and pasty, will be no bad companions to carry under our doublets; but before we attack the walls of this venison citadel, let our first skirmishing cup be to the health of our brave Elector, Duke Maurice of Saxony, now Burgrave of Magdeburg.”

“How often, Hendrick,” observed the foremost trooper, “has this toast been your pass word to more substantial fare this day ?”

“This is my maiden draught, friend,” he replied, “for in truth, (not with my good will you can believe) master tankard and I have not saluted each other since yesternight; raw water and black bread have been my only intimates. The Elector has given my limbs plenty of work since the dawn, but has graciously granted a holiday to my stomach. I am quite ready to test my powers of digestion, even if the fare were less tempting than that before us, but he hath well rewarded my fasting.”

“Hath he made a saint of you,” rejoined another, “in honour of your abstinence?”

“No, no, not so,” quoth Hendrick, nodding his head with a half laugh, “you know as well as I, he doth not graze such cattle on his manor, he hath given me promotion, a well filled purse, and kindly words, and here’s to his health.”

He filled the horn cups to their brims, and raising his broad, slouched, felt-hat from

his head, reverently repeated his toast, and at one draught emptied his horn.

The troopers with a hearty cheer, followed his example, and replaced theirs on the board. Hendrick still stood; he seemed with attentive ears for a moment to be debating with himself some knotty point, then again, half replenishing the cups, cried :

“ Another toast, friends, and after to our game.”

“ What now, master ?” exclaimed one of them; “ if we go on thus, we shall have nought in the flagon to wash down the meat.”

“ Never fear mine hungry Wolff,” retorted Hendrick, “ I’ll answer for it this portly fellow, (pointing to the flagon,) will last out the feast.”

“ Wolff, he had you there,” exclaimed the first speaker, “ but let us have the toast as well as the tankard, for I would fain fall to

as well as Wolff, and love not much prating upon an empty stomach."

"Confusion to all spies," roared Hendrick, in a voice which rang round the place, and proved that his fast had not enfeebled his lungs.

"Confusion to all spies," repeated the troopers; "and now," said Wolff after Hendrick's double grace, "we will score a more solid reckoning," at the same time dropping himself heavily on the settle.

"Not so fast, my friends," said Hendrick, "such vermin as we have denounced, should be hunted out from house and hall."

So saying he made a sign to the men, and advanced quickly towards the trophy, from behind which he dragged forth the concealed watcher, who struggled to escape from Hendrick's powerful gripe, but five were too many for him.

"Whom have we here?" they cried.

"One," answered Hendrick, "who loves

to prowl in the dark, and is after no good now, I'll be sworn. Your humble servant, redoubted lieutenant Hartorff, is it you? I guess you are here without the ceremony of an invitation, and therefore without ceremony shall you depart."

"At your peril keep your hands from me," cried Hartorff, "you shall repent this assault."

"Out with you, you lurking spy, out with you," cried the troopers.

With the flat sides of their swords they drove him from the hall, and chased him beyond the gates. In a short space the repast was concluded, and the party wrapped in their cloaks, asleep on the rude settles.

Hartorff, who had flattered himself that he was safely ensconced before Hendrick could perceive him, burning with rage, made for the senate house.

Some few were still holding their revels at

the banquet, which the higher authorities had long since left. Hartorff was pretty well assured that his master would not forego the wine cup, while any remained to bear him company: he was not so certain that he should find him in a condition to receive, or make use of the intelligence which he had to communicate, nor was it an easy affair to gain access to him; the last obstacle however proved a less difficult matter than he had anticipated. He boldly demanded entrance; his audacity, the half oblivious state of the attendants, and the Elector's name artfully mixed up in his harangue to the door-keepers, procured him admittance to a party less exclusive than he would have found earlier in the day, being now much reduced in numbers, and those of an inferior rank: But with them, or any, Reiterstein did not scruple to associate, proud as he was, if the purpose of his own views could be answered

by so doing. He wished to ferret out the gossip of the town, for in those days this species of useless knowledge, the food of mean, vacant, and corrupted minds, was in vogue as it now is, and doubtless has ever been.

Wishing to compass this end, he had not drunk so deep as usual, though he had incited others to do so, and Hartorff found him comparatively sober. A whisper from his lieutenant, stimulated him to free himself as quickly as he could from the company of his present associates, and in spite of remonstrance, flattery or entreaty, he left the still festive board.

The pair walked on in silence, avoiding the more crowded streets, till Hartorff in a narrow and dark alley stopped before a low door, in order to enter which, three steps were to be descended. An aged woman answered the summons, and ushered them into a small but decent apartment ; there

was little of comfort, but the place was more cleanly than the appearance of the neighbourhood promised. The woman placed a small lamp on a rickety table, and a nod from Hartorff dismissed her.

The Baron looked at his lieutenant, preparing himself to ask for an explanation of all this mystery, but the other did not wait for questions.

“The old woman is deaf,” he observed, “and lives alone. I thought such a place safe for consultation, and easily bargained with her for its use, on exhibiting a few kreutzers.”

“And what mighty matter, lieutenant, may you have to propound, that warrants your leading me to this hovel?”

“Much, master of mine; I have tracked our game,” he said with a malicious grin.

“Ah! exclaimed the Baron, drawing the stool on which he had seated him-

self nearer to the table, "how did you compass this?"

"Thus," replied Hartorff. "While you were engaged at the banquet with that mountebank, Maurice, and the fat citizens, who were giving work to the tailors by stretching their laced doublets beyond their capacity, I prowled about, partly to view this city, of the sacking of which we have been defrauded, and partly hoping by some chance I might among the comers and goers gain tidings of these reluctant damsels. I had just determined to drown my disappointment in a potation of Rhenish at a neighbouring wine house, when two persons issued from the porch of St. Catherina; they were at some distance before me, but I could not be mistaken in the figure of your straight laced clerk; the female was so closely hooded and cloaked, that she puzzled my discrimination, but this the more determined me not to lose sight of

them. I dodged them about the town, till I saw them make towards the Castle ; I neared and followed them closely ; so little watch or ward has been kept there to day, that I easily entered with them. They were too full of love, and too intent upon looking at each other to turn round. When they arrived in the hall, I made my steps keep pace with theirs so that a third footfall might not be heard, for there is as much echo in the place as if one were walking on a drum-head. Gliding close along the side most in shadow, I concealed myself behind the great trophy which projects somewhat before the other figures, and conveniently heard their conversation. In regaining my position, however, I stumbled over the platform on which that mummery is placed, and Madame Thumelda's ears (for it was she) were pricked up in a moment, but the smooth tongued clerk chid her fears, and I then learnt that she

was the Lady Clotildas's serving woman, and that both were living in the Castle.

When they parted I was intent upon seeing where the damsel went, but that rough Hendrick came blustering in with some of his fellows, and, I conclude, espied me before I could settle myself in my former hiding place. I suppose the torches which the lacqueys brought in, to light up the hall, favoured his discovery of me, for—" and here Hartorff with sundry interlarded imprecations detailed his forcible expulsion from the castle.

"Think you he will tell of your exploits?" demanded the Baron.

"Doubtless he will, if he has the opportunity, for as I could gather, young horn-book was called to fetch the dispatches which the other was to carry; but this is partly conjecture."

"Not a moment must be lost," cried Reiterstein, "follow me."

Two or three strides brought them again into the alley, and with rapid steps they gained the castle in time to see Hendrick and his fellow troopers leave its gates, for Konrad's quick return had cut short their snatched slumbers. A projecting angle concealed the spies, till the clattering hoofs of the horses on the drawbridge assured them that they might come forth in safety. No entrance was to be obtained, for the watches were set, and after strolling about the precincts for some time hoping to glean some intelligence from any domestic who might chance to come forth, they were abandoning their watch, when the pass word demanded and answered, sent them again under the shadow of a buttress.

“It is the clerk, I'll be sworn,” whispered Hartorff.

“We must secure him,” returned the Baron.

In one moment Konrad's **K**bridle rein was

seized, for it was he, on his way to the now nearly deserted camp. The horse reared and released his head, while Konrad parried the efforts of his two assailants to unhorse him. With a sudden spring, Hartorff jumped on the animal's back, and encircling the youth with his long arms, endeavoured to unseat him. The Baron wheeled round in order to regain the bridle, but the spur timely applied, left him some paces behind. The skirmish was too close to the gate to escape the ears of the sentinels, and the alarm given, warned the Baron that further assault would only lead to shame, as well as discovery. Konrad, still struggling against the attempts which the lieutenant made to dislodge him, nevertheless did not spare the spur, to rid himself of at least one of his assailants, and put some distance between them; he was too tightly pinioned by Hartorff's brawny arms to draw his sword, but he still held command of the rein; he knew

his horse well, for it was his favourite Black John, who, with his master, had, been transferred into Maurice's service. Konrad had taken some pains in his leisure hours with his training, and by various motions of the knee, heel, and hand, had instructed him in an alphabet of manœuvres not safe to a rider inexperienced in the rudiments of his education.

“ You had better dismount, Lieutenant Hartorff,” said Konrad coolly, as he put the animal by a slight jerk of his rein, into a hard and uneasy trot ; but Hartorff, unconscious of the defection of his master, still held on. Konrad finding one arm of his unwelcome companion slackening its hold, and knowing Hartorff's skilful use of the dagger, lost not a moment ; by a pressure of the heel, he instructed the beast to kick off his additional incumbrance. Had Hartorff continued his close embrace, this movement would have been hazardous ; but

with the unequal balance of one arm, Black John's sudden plunge lodged him on the pointed stones with which the way was paved. The fall was violent and heavy; Konrad left him stunned, and pursued his way with all speed.

To do the Baron justice, he had watched the fate of his follower; he still hoped that the desired prisoner might be mastered; if Hartorff were worsted, exposure might follow, nor could he yet spare him. He followed quickly, therefore, the receding echoes of the hoofs, and found him where Black John had thrown him. With some difficulty he removed him under the projecting eaves of a neighbouring building, and in trepidation awaited his recovery to consciousness; he relied on the darkness of the night to elude observation; the cold breeze was also a friendly doctor, and the Baron congratulated himself, when, after a slow parading through the now deserted streets, he entered the low

portal of his lieutenant's temporary abode, and consigned him to the care of his deaf hostess. Signs soon set her to work to provide the necessary remedies, and the Baron walked off to his own quarters that suspicion might not rest upon them as disturbers of the night guard, making up his mind to deny their identity, if Konrad should bring any accusation against them.

CHAPTER X.

DUKE George left the Castle before Hendrick's departure. He was too much disconcerted, to bid adieu to the Countess or Mathilda, but rode straight for the camp, where he was to enlist, and take the command of the troops who had been expelled from Magdeburg, and as his days were not likely to be passed in inactivity, he hoped to soften, if not dismiss altogether, the remembrance of his mortification.

He did not spare his steed, but spurred on with mad impetuosity, as if pestilence was pursuing him, and disaster, which he could avert by haste, was before him, or that in leaving the town behind him, he could fly from the barb which was rankling in his bosom, or heal the wound his self-love had received: as he passed the slumbering troopers in the hall, he almost desired their low condition; while his brow was contracted with care, his cheek burning with anger, his hands clenched in defiance, their marked and sunburnt features, and listless postures, gave no evidence of inward disturbance. Hardness and exposure had chased away the freshness and beauty of youth, but their robust frames, and open brows, told no tales of annoyance or disappointment. At that moment he envied the rough soldiers, who in the next battle field might fall among the mass of slaughtered friends and foes, unknown, unhonoured,

and unwept : reflection did not whisper that he owed his disappointment to his own wayward passions and unreasonable desires, but it was not in his nature to indulge in self-examination, or to draw a balance against himself, by a retrospection of his own conduct ; his bravery was cruel and rash, and his impetuosity set all the consequences of his unconsidered actions at defiance ; the rein of reflection is an irksome bridle to a character of impulse, but the habit of comparison, by a constant exertion of the powers of the understanding, becomes in time a natural operation of the mind, enforcing justice, truth, and moderation.

When Konrad sought Hendrick to deliver to him the despatches, the latter communicated to him the suspicious circumstance of Hartorff's concealment. There could be little doubt that his conversation with Thumelda had been overheard by him, and that

the utmost vigilance would be necessary to guard against Reiterstein's machinations.

As he accompanied the Duke to the gallery, where Mansfeldt, his Countess, and Count Heideck, were waiting to receive and conduct him to the state apartments, he respectfully and succinctly related the facts stated by Hendrick. The Duke stopped, and drew forth a small key, which he placed in his hand, and with a few brief directions, dismissed him,—recommending speed.

On the Duke's appearance, Clotilda could hardly conceal her emotion; she longed to throw herself at his feet, and pour forth her gratitude in thanks: Otho's arm was a timely support, but her tears in spite of every effort to check them, rushed to her eyes, and she felt thankful for the few moments of respite, which his kindly enquiries and friendly greeting to Mathilda allowed her. Though unobserved by her, he per-

ceived her agitation, and considerably prolonged his conversation; then advancing towards her, with gentleness took her hand, and leading her to a seat, said—

“I think I do not err in believing that I have the pleasure of addressing the lady Clotilda.” And seeing her unable to answer him further than by an inclination of the head, he continued:—

“To your husband, fair lady, and his character as a valiant soldier and true knight, I am no stranger; to you I must pledge that homage which he has rendered to me. I am quite sure I cannot place his fidelity in better hands.”

“Or, I trust, your Highness,” replied Clotilda with deep feeling—while the colour mounted into her face—“in a more grateful heart. To your Highness’s condescension in protecting us, I owe my safety and preservation from dishonour.”

“Upon my word, fair lady, if our ac-

quaintance had borne an earlier date than the present hour, I could, I fear, claim little merit even from you, who are inclined to award me so much. Besides in passing over your husband's brave actions, his sufferings in my service, owing to his captivity and separation from you, of which painful endurance I can now form a juster estimate, made me so much his debtor in the first instance, that I should indeed have proved myself a bankrupt in gratitude, had I done less, with the power to do so much more. I am no stranger to your sad history, as well as to the hazardous position in which you now stand, but I trust all this will shortly be amended, and with my good will it shall be so."

Maurice now led her on to explain many points of her story, with which he was as yet unacquainted, then rising, conversed generally with those around, before he

quitted the true hearts he had bound to his interests.

On retiring, he found Konrad awaiting him to give an account of his commission, and his narrow escape in the execution of it. Maurice had said truly, that his interest in Clotilda's fate was not diminished by the impression which her beauty and manners had made upon him, and he could even have found some excuse for Reiterstein, if he had not known him to be the sordid, fraudulent, and selfish being that he was. He was not surprised, when the Baron at an early hour of the following morning, sent to request an audience.

Reiterstein was compelled to this bold measure, for he was well aware he must quit the city that day, and that any attempt on Clotilda now, and while under such powerful protection, would be useless: he was determined therefore to claim her as

we have before said, as his bride, as his ward, or both. As his bride, upon the plea of being affianced, if her birth could not be established, as her guardian, if it could, and the latter, to combine both claims.

His request was granted, but with little satisfaction to himself, for instead of urging his suit to [Maurice in a *tête-à-tête*, he found the Duke encircled by the assembled family of Mansfeldt, with the addition of Otho and Count Heideck.

As he advanced, the Duke received him with a slight inclination, and somewhat sternly demanded the object of the audience, he had sent so hastily to request. While advancing and bowing to Maurice, Reiterstein's dark eye scanned those around, and ultimately fixing its glare on Clotilda, he recovered during the pause his self-possession, which had been momentarily overbalanced and abashed by Maurice's reception, and the numbers his Highness had as-

sembled, to witness an interview which he desired should be private.

“My object, your Highness, is briefly told; it is to claim a lady whom I now see in your presence, as my affianced bride, and of whom I may say I have been robbed.”

“Were the lady’s wishes in accordance with yours, Baron?”

“I have reason to believe they were, your Highness, inasmuch as the marriage ceremony had been commenced at the altar, to which altar she went willingly.”

“And did she accept you freely when there, Baron? did she freely seek your castle as her future home?”

Reiterstein bit his lips: he left the first question unanswered.

“She had been misled, Duke, and had left through the persuasion of others the asylum in which I had placed her, until I could leave Italy to make her mistress of my

home. From such designing hands I rescued her."

"Good, Baron ; you seem to have some reason on your side ; but suppose the lady should deny her concurrence in these arrangements, you cannot think of prosecuting your suit, and forcing her inclinations ? Let her declare her wishes on the subject ; what say you, fair lady ? are you willing to admit the claims which the Baron urges to your fair hand ?"

"He has ever been, your Highness," cried Clotilda with energy, "my detestation, terror and abhorrence."

"This is a strong denial, Baron ; are you now satisfied that the lady's consent is wanting to fulfil the compact ?"

The Baron was at fault ; he feared the pitfall which might be before him, but he must proceed, and tried to shape a middle course.

"I was willing to claim that lady," he

urged, "by the tenderest ties, and therefore have held back the other grounds upon which I am entitled to be her protector, if she refuses me as her affianced husband."

"Name them, Baron."

"They are these," replied Reiterstein. "In her early years, upon the death of her parents, she was left in my hands as her guardian: she is not yet of age, and as her guardian, I also proclaim my right to the custody of her person?"

"Has she lands, Baron?"

"Your Highness well knows that women hold no fiefs."

"They may possess lands, nevertheless, good sir: you evade my question."

"Some trifling lands she may have, if she can make good her title to them, which I doubt."

"And who gainsays her right?"

"The heirs, of course, Duke."

“And who may they be, Baron?”

“She is a distant branch of my family.”

“Then I am to understand that poor, and probably penniless, the noble Baron von Reiterstein generously supported her during her youth, and was willing to take her, a possibly portionless bride: a most liberal proceeding on his part, and apparently but ill requited by the lady’s rejection of his tender guardianship and love.”

The half ironical seriousness of this speech, again threw the Baron into confusion.

“It appears,” he continued, “that you have little to regret beyond the loss of the lady’s reluctant hand; I should therefore advise you to seek a more complying fair one to heal your disappointment.”

“My claims I will neither yield nor aban-

don, your Highness," and, with increasing vehemence, he exclaimed—

"She must, and shall be delivered into my charge."

"Impossible, Baron von Reiterstein; she is already married."

"Married! married!" he shouted in passion forgetting the Duke's presence. "Married!" and rushing forward towards Clotilda, he rudely seized her arm, while he gazed upon her with fiend-like ferocity. "Married, dare you repeat that word?"

"I dare," said Clotilda undauntedly.

"And I, her husband," exclaimed Otho, snatching Clotilda from his rude grasp, "uphold it, and forbid your unhallowed touch."

"I am her guardian," he replied with rage, "and my consent must, but never shall, sanction her union with you, braggart."

“Excuse me Baron,” said Duke Maurice, “for the few months or perhaps weeks which remain till this lady attains her majority, I constitute myself her guardian and protector, and as such shall demand from you a restitution of her property and rights, with the restoration of all arrears since her abduction from the place of her birth. To you, Sir Otho, as her lawful husband, I consign her.”

“Proofs, your Highness, proofs.”

The Duke nodded to Konrad who was in attendance. “We will satisfy you, Baron, with living proofs.”

The Baron was stupified; he knew not what to dread; his life of fraud seemed bestriding him, like a night-mare his boldness apparently had ruined him; his subtlety had not availed him; how was it, how could it be? The Duke must feign more knowledge than he really possessed. He cast down his eyes, and pondered his next mea-

sure and his next speech, but when he raised them again to address Maurice in further remonstrance, Father Augustine was standing by the Elector's side. Years had passed over him, but the Baron's memory carried him back to trace the well-remembered features which time had mellowed from vigorous maturity to age, but had not altered. Augustine respectfully advanced nearer to Maurice, and placing some papers in his hand, said—

“Your Highness, to your keeping I resign the title deeds and also the last will, to which besides myself there are living witnesses, (no thanks to the Baron,) of my late Lord, Baron Lewis von Reiterstein, in favour of his only child, the Lady Clotilda, now before you, whose growing goodness and graces I have watched from time to time since her infancy, which infancy has ripened into womanhood under the care of our excellent mother, the Abbess of Walsrode. Most

gladly I consign the keeping of these documents to hands so well able to enforce her rights; more it is unnecessary for me to state, for your Highness is in possession of all the facts; but for your reference, you will find them detailed in an enclosure with the papers I have now delivered."

"I think, Baron," observed the Duke, "your doubts and misapprehensions, (if you have any) must now be cleared, but as this is a day of restitution, allow me to place in your hands a weapon which bears your initials, and which was used by your retainer against a sleeping and innocent man, the chief witness with the holy Father of the deed which he has just placed in my hands, and remember Baron von Reiterstein," he added, rising with a look of haughty and stern command, "that he also is under Maurice's protection, and that if himself, his property, or any member of his family or household suffer further molesta-

tion from you or those under your command, to Maurice you shall answer for it,—your audience is ended.”

With rage and confusion, the Baron retired, to plot new schemes of vengeance in spite of Maurice’s warning.

He bent his steps to Hartorff’s abode, where to his further discomfiture, he found him in a worse state than he had apprehended ; his life was of consequence to him, for he knew not where to look for so hardy and acute a coadjutor. He was at present in no state to assist him ; he did not feel sure that he could place confidence in Ludwig, even if he were on the spot, for a doubt hung on his mind whether he would yield as hearty and ready a concurrence to his plans and practices ; he had never made a confidant of him ; for some reason or from some accident, his contrivances had always failed when intrusted to his execution. He feared he should be compelled, if his lieu-

tenant's life was to be preserved, to seek some further assistance for him however disinclined to do so, for he apprehended the disclosures which he might make in his present state of delirium. The poor widow, who attributed to accident the mischance of her unfortunate lodger, entreated the Baron to suffer her to seek a leech; she was sure that unless he granted her this permission, the poor fellow would die.

The Baron could not deny the possibility of such a fatal occurrence, but shook his head at the proposition.

She still held on her argument, while Hartorff groaning and imprecating by turns, continued to rave and call for wine. As the Baron was revolving in his mind the necessity pointed out to him, and which was evident to himself, the step of some one entering the small chamber which opened into the street and was next to the one they were occupying, though unheard by

the deaf hostess, caused him to start from the low seat which he had placed by the side of the truckle bed on which Hartorff was rolling in delirium and writhing with pain. Before he could gain the door to deny entrance to the intruder it was opened, and a mendicant friar, clad in the deep brown coarse cloth of his order, stood at the foot of the bed. He was evidently no stranger in the house, but gazed in astonishment at the spectacle before him. Hartorff's face was turned towards the window, which was on the side opposite to the door, and which looked into a small court yard.

He made signs to the woman for an explanation, who answered the mute signal, by crying :

“Woe is me, holy Father ; I fear he will die, thus has he been for hours, and neither doctor nor priest to help his body, or save his soul.”

The friar turned to the Baron, and said :

“Son, I have some knowledge in these matters, and as the case seems to demand immediate attention, I will use the little skill I possess to relieve this wounded sufferer, who appears indeed to be in too desperate a plight to be left longer without the application of some remedies.”

Reiterstein bowed in acquiescence, he had not thrown aside his cloak, which concealed his rich dress and figure, and on the friar's entrance he had hastily resumed his broad beaver, which he had previously cast on the floor at his feet. The friar continued :

“From the moans which issued as I passed, from this good woman's house who is well known to me as one of my penitents, I feared some disaster had befallen her, and this accounts for my intrusion, which I hope, however, may be productive of some alleviation to this poor fellow.”

Again the Baron made a slight inclination ; the friar was too intent upon his work

of charity to notice his silence. He approached the bed, and with the assistance of the old woman, raised the patient's head in order to examine his wounds and bruises. He gazed on Hartorff's features, distorted by the agony he was enduring. As he did so, a deadly pallor spread over his own countenance, and he sank on the seat from which the Baron had arisen.

“Heaven be praised!” he said, as he crossed himself.

Reiterstein drew some hope from this exclamation, that the lieutenant's case was not a hopeless one. After examining the wounded man's face for a few seconds, he again said in a low voice:—

“Yes it is so.” Then turning to the Baron; “If you will seek such medicines as I shall prescribe, I will look to the man's wounds and watch by him till you return.”

He now drew from the canvass bag which was attached to his hempen girdle, and was

designed for the reception of the alms bestowed by his penitents, a small book, on a leaf of which he noted down the simples and drugs which he would require, and handed it over to the Baron, who then withdrew and left the good Samaritan to his operations for the relief of the sufferer.

As soon as he was gone the friar threw open the window, which seemed to afford some comfort to the fevered man, although still unconscious of anything but pain.

The poor widow, in answer to the friar's questions, could tell him but little of her inmates. The preceding day had been the first of their acquaintance. She was willing to accommodate him for a few days for the sum, paltry as it was, which would help out her spare means. The friar shook his head. From this action she mistook his meaning, and in sorrow that she might in his estimation have committed a fault, began to justify herself upon the undeniable plea of her

extreme poverty. The friar quieted her tender conscience on this head, by a friendly nod, and an encouraging smile; he made her assist during the examination of Hartorff's injuries, and then set her about such further arrangements as were required, and awaiting the Baron's return, was soon lost in meditation and prayer, every now and then turning his eyes with a look of mingled horror and concern upon the object before him when aroused from his abstraction by his moans.

The Baron, punctual in the discharge of the errand he had undertaken, returned with the required drugs, which he deposited upon the table together with a purse of money, while in a low voice he informed the holy man that he was obliged to quit the city that evening; that in the purse he would find money enough for his patient's use, to remunerate his hostess and to provide masses for his soul if he should not re-

cover, as well as alms for the poor ; that if he was spared, he was to join him when restored to convalescence ; it was unnecessary for him to leave any direction as to where, as his charge was already informed of his movements. The friar watched him as he made his exit, and then turned his attention to his patient.

The Baron now collected those of his followers who had accompanied him into Magdeburg, and rode forth at their head as the sun was leaving the world to the gloom of a November evening.

CHAPTER XI.

MAURICE had left the party with whom he had spent the last two hours far happier than he had found them; Clotilda's beaming eyes were radiant with gladness; throwing her arm over Otho's shoulder, she looked in his face with a mixed expression of tenderness and joy, while a tear to the memory of past trials and sorrows, like a summer drop from an unclouded sky, scarce dimmed the brightness of those dark blue orbs which gazed so lovingly upon him.

“Are we not now blessed and happy, my Otho,” she whispered; “were but our cherished Lewis nestling with infant smiles between us, what long indulged hope could we say was unaccomplished, what desire ungratified, what mercy denied?”

“None, my beloved one, for Heaven has deigned to bless me beyond my deserving through thee; but——”

“But what my Otho?”

“A name, Clotilda,” he replied with mortified and earnest expression. “The desired knowledge of a parentage if not noble, at least honest. I will not vex your generous nature by lamenting our inequality of wealth, for could I bestow upon you ten times told the dowry you may bring to me it were freely yours, nor should I for one moment feel that you were my debtor for such worldly dross; but to look on you, good, noble, lovely as you are, and to know that he who holds you peerless among wo-

men, has not even a name, however humble, which may be joined with yours and transmitted to our children and their posterity, damps even the bliss of calling you mine; now more than ever does it weigh upon my heart, since rescued from oppression and obscurity, honoured and protected, you might claim alliance with the noblest of your land. Oh! deem me not weak or ungrateful, if thoughts so cutting and bitter poison even the joys of such a day as this. Clotilda," he continued, clasping his hands across his face, "I have no name, I can claim no country, no kindred."

"Forbear, Otho, by the love you have sworn to me, by the faith you have plighted with me, forbear to blight me with these sad regrets. Did you woo me from a brilliant court? Did you lure and bear me from a splendid home? Did you lead to the altar a gorgeously apparelled bride, surrounded by a throng of tender relatives,

contesting rivals, and admirers? Did you not woo me from the secluded cloister to the sacred fane, in lowly garb, oppressed, forgotten, penniless? Oh! think not, my Otho, of what my restored rights may give me, but remember what I was and might now be, but for that generous hero's justice and protection, that pride of Germany, Duke Maurice. I have no relatives, my husband," she continued tenderly while she drew his cold hand within her own, "surely thus we are equal; I have won no honour save in wedding thee, for being a woman I cannot raise my name to higher distinction than Providence fixed upon me at my birth, an undeserved inheritance; but you will be the founder of a line and name which will honour you in posterity, while mine shall sink in yours, and yours be mine and my children's. Nay Otho, let not the reflections of such worldly conventions array themselves in your thoughts in comparison with my pure love,

which in the blessing of possessing yours holds them but as baubles to cheat the grown children of this world into that order and submission designed for the well being of society. Wealth, title, name, are comprised within the golden circle of your love, your honour is my wealth, your heart, my coronet." Otho clasped her in his arms and begged forgiveness for the expression of those regrets, which pressed most upon him when her beauty and virtue called forth his admiration and displayed her fitness for the state she was entitled to adorn.

Thus it is, the ungrateful and unsatisfied heart of man ever presents some obstacle to perfect happiness, and who among Christians professing its creed of forbearance, humility, and content, can say that in his present enjoyment his heart is satisfied, his desires fulfilled? Like the vexed, restless, and engulfing ocean, he still draws upon every tributary stream which

can fill to overflowing his fathomless hopes, his boundless wishes ; not meekly considering that in Heaven alone can they be accomplished, that in a brief space mortality must cast aside its hopes and its anticipations, and the agony of death be passed ere the boon of perfect and eternal bliss can be awarded to him.

Clotilda allayed, but could not banish from her husband's mind the apprehension that he might be the offspring of guilt. The good father had often discussed the point with him, and although he could give him no clue to his parentage, he had detailed to him such slender information as he possessed, which induced the youth at times to believe that although he could not trace his origin, there was no reason to suppose that any stigma was attached to his birth. Under his care, Otho had been reared from infancy to manhood ; he had known no other father ; from no other hand had

he received benefits; to him alone he owed the means which had forwarded him in the path of glory, in order to pursue which, when he found his pupil so steadfastly averse to a religious life, he had spared no pains to fit him. Possessing high powers and a liberal mind, Otho could not have found a more rational friend or more able instructor than his benefactor. In his holy missions, he had traversed many countries, and was free from the bigotry engendered by the trammels and seclusion of a strictly monastic life. His superiors found that his gentle persuasions and reasonable indulgence brought more wanderers back, and held their brethren more steadfastly in the Catholic faith than any denunciations from them could do. On its abuses he was silent; he contented himself with not taking advantage of and avoiding the practice of them. His arms against heresy were mild exhortations, charity, the

example of true apostolic piety, and a blameless life. To him, therefore—although often condemning his leniency—they more frequently entrusted the task of preventing defections and healing schisms; where he could not approve or convince, he tolerated; and thus, as well as the friendship and influence which he enjoyed with the cardinal of Trent who was sincerely attached to Maurice, he possessed through him that Prince's confidence. His missions were wide and frequent, and on many of these Otho had accompanied him. In this manner his pupil early received the useful lesson to judge mankind, but to judge them as a Christian, mercifully, and without prejudice; to shape his behaviour by the pure example of his mentor's conduct, and to emulate him in that learning and those acquirements which are noble distinctions even in the eyes of the ignorant; engines of power, more particularly in those times when put

in operation to propel the frail and erring into the ways of truth and holiness.

The Countess, who was seated at some distance and engaged in earnest discourse with Henry and Mathilda, heard no part of the conversation between her guests. Henry, who had excused himself from accompanying the Duke and his uncle, was energetically urging an immediate union with his cousin.

“When so fitting a time?” he said. “The siege is ended; all operations of war must be suspended during the winter months; indeed I know that it is the Elector’s intention to dismiss his own Saxon subjects to their homes, to pay off his mercenaries, and peaceably enjoying the society of his Duchess, to regulate during his leisure the affairs of his own states.

The Countess smiled, and asked him if the Elector had made him his confidant. It was not usual for his Highness to be so

communicative, even to his most confidential ministers. Henry acknowledged that he judged partly from report; he knew that Arnoldi had by command, arrived from Wittenberg the evening before the capitulation, and was making arrangements for the payment of the troops. If the Countess would only look from the window at which they were seated, she would see that the season was come when it was impossible to keep the field. Duke Maurice was much too prudent a general to hazard such an attempt even if war was in progress; if they were wedded now, they would have months of tranquil enjoyment before them.

“I must confess, Henry,” replied the Countess, smiling, “that time presses, both Mathilda and yourself are of an age which demands dispatch, lest gray hairs should mingle in your bridal wreaths; and you are both also fraught with experience to struggle with uncertain fortune and family cares.”

“Thus it ever is,” replied Henry pettishly, “my youth is quoted against me. One spares my life in compassion to my tender years ; another, some three or four years my senior, thinks the stripling an unworthy antagonist, and—”

“And another,” interrupted his aunt, finishing his speech for him, “believes that at twenty you can afford time to delay matrimony for a few months. These objections on the score of youth, Henry, must by nature be transient ones ; such a reflection must console you for a delay which believe me, arises on our parts from necessity, not caprice. Of the Elector’s plans, intentions, or future movements we had better not judge, and certainly not speak unless we would lose his friendship, and give him cause to distrust both our prudence and good faith.”

“To none other than yourself,” he replied, blushing, “would I have spoken thus

openly. I had always hoped, that when the fate of this town was decided, I should be permitted to call my cousin my bride."

"This was a structure of your own raising, Henry, for I am sure neither your uncle nor myself assisted you to rear it. I cannot assert with equal confidence that Mathilda's indisposition to help you in the completion of your building, may have been as decidedly shown."

Mathilda looked at her mother reproachfully, annoyed that she should suspect her of such unbecoming haste, but saw by the arch mischief in her parent's eye, that she had no belief in this implied accusation, the meaning of which was rather an ironical taunt to Henry, and directly the reverse of her words.

"Not so," answered Henry rather peevishly, "my fair cousin seems in no haste to bind herself, and call her lover, husband,

but requires a long siege before she will come to terms."

"But I suppose, master Henry, you hope she will surrender at last. I am inclined to think, that if I had courageously repelled your advances in the first instance, you would not have been so well assured of an early capitulation," returned Mathilda.

"I have much inclination," retorted Henry, "to enlist the Elector in my service; Arnaldi says, he is so tender hearted, that he cannot bear to see those for whom he has a regard, unhappy, and he appears to have the power to induce every one to think as he does, and act as he directs, whether or not bound by their duty and allegiance to do so. How soon and ably he quenched that cunning and fiery Baron. My uncle I am sure would not hold out against his wishes."

"Perhaps, my confident cousin, your aunt

and her daughter might do so ; but depend upon it he would raise the siege, which, without the adequate forces of sound arguments, you have so boldly ventured upon."

"Nor would he," joined in his aunt, "under our circumstances, advocate anything so impolitic."

The conversation of all parties was here interrupted by the re-entrance of the Father, who had left them soon after the Baron had been dismissed. Maurice, accompanied by Mansfeldt and Heideck, had gone to the Senate House to receive the oaths of fidelity and allegiance, from the people of Katzenellenbogen and Dietz.

The Father requested Otho's attention for a few minutes, and withdrew with him into an antechamber. On their return, Augustine took Clotilda's hand, and told her he was come to bid her adieu for a time.

"What! so soon, good Father? I have

much to say before you leave us; advice and kindness to ask from you."

"I know your wishes, my daughter; of all temporal affairs, your welfare and that of your husband is ever uppermost in my thoughts, and nearest my heart: I must not linger."

He gave her his blessing, and bidding the rest of the party farewell, left them.

Thumelda received her lady with looks of anxious enquiry. She had awaited her coming with all the impatience of affection. She had observed Reiterstein leave the Castle, and conceived, from his rapid movements and impatient gestures to his attendants, who were waiting for him, that he had met with some rebuff. He did not mount his horse, but dismissed his grooms, as she judged by their tarrying some time to joke with the lacqueys and loitering soldiers. Soon after his departure, as she continued to watch the movements of those below, she

saw the Elector and his retinue come forth, mount their horses, and pass into the town.

She began to fear that all had not gone so smoothly as she had hoped, since her considerate mistress did not appear to relieve her suspense. She found no occupation to her taste, or which could engage her attention for two minutes together. When the movements in the court yard could yield her no further information, she paced the room restlessly, then opened the wardrobes, and made a selection of the most costly and becoming attire for Clotilda's adornment. Apprehension came over her, and another more simple was drawn forth; this was too plain; another and another was chosen and rejected, none fixed upon; and finally overcome by anxiety, she threw herself into a seat, more inclined to weep than laugh.

Clotilda found her surrounded with the

contents of her wardrobe, for almost unconsciously she had distributed over the apartment pretty nearly the whole stock of gear committed to her custody; sitting with her hands crossed, and her eyes fixed on the door, the poor girl did not move. She had worked herself up to a state so nearly approaching agony, that she had no longer the power when Clotilda entered, to ask what she so much desired to know. Her Lady's beaming face told the tale she wished to hear, and throwing herself into her arms, she wept for joy.

Clotilda felt deeply the good maiden's attachment; no greater proof was needed, for she was of a buoyant nature, and had always displayed fortitude upon trying occasions. Though full of tenderness and feeling, tears with her were rarities, in which she was seldom wont or inclined to indulge. Clotilda pressed her to her bosom, and making her take a seat by her side,

gave her an account of all that had passed with Maurice's able exposure of Reiterstein's villany.

"The good Father, where is he gone?" she enquired.

"He would not say," replied her mistress, "I trust he will not expose himself to the Baron's revenge."

"Never fear, my lady; that noble will not incur, or call down upon himself the vengeance of the church, by an open attack upon one of its most valuable, venerable, and esteemed members. Now his dark deeds have come to the Duke's knowledge, if any mischance befalls the Father, he will be instantly suspected; he will rather select a humbler victim on whom to wreak his malice."

Clotilda arose looking round with some surprise.

"May I ask Thumelda your motive for this unusual display of my wearing ap-

parel?" then taking up a dress of white and gold brocade—"Is not this a costly contrast to the coarse and humble garments in which we made our escape from the home of my fathers, and their tattered condition when we arrived here? Yet how little thought did personal decoration then cause me; how little care when I discovered that it was my husband who had guided me to the lone hut on that wild moor."

Thumelda laughed when she surveyed the quantity and confusion of the finery she had collected, and how industrious she had been in displaying such a variety. Clotilda restrained herself from joining in her mirth, however much disposed to do so, for the distress of mind which had caused Thumelda thus unconsciously to bestrew the room with the contents of the presses, demanded a more respectful feeling, as it showed a devoted attachment far too precious to be a fit subject for jesting.

Thumelda, not satisfied with the relation she had received, found still a hundred questions to ask, while she busied herself in remedying the disorder she had created. Thrice was her patient mistress obliged to repeat her tale. The gratitude of her humble companion to the noble Duke for his protection of her relatives, knew no bounds; she only lamented he was not Emperor, and that her lowly station precluded her from approaching him to speak her gratitude. For the first time she avowed that she envied the noble birth of her beloved lady, who had the power to do so, though she did not believe that so generous a Prince would deny or disdain the thanks of his meanest subject. She became at last, sufficiently composed to assist Clotilda in preparing her toilet to join the guests who were to assemble and await the Duke's return and appearance among them at the hour of the banquet.

CHAPTER XII.

DURING Maurice's sojourn in Magdeburg, he made every arrangement for the peace and good order of the town. The preachers had excused themselves as well as they could do to his counsellors, Fuchsen, Carlevitz, and Mordeysm, for their libels, lampoons, satirical pictures, and preachings against him, and defended also their accusations, that he was fighting to subvert the Protestant faith, to which he still protested his steady adherence, with his intention to

advocate and uphold it through his ambassadors at the Council of Trent; he then directed prayers to be offered up in all the churches for the Emperor and himself conjointly.

At an early hour on a November morning, the army began to file through the gates by troops and companies; it is unnecessary to say that Reiterstein and his regiment were not among them. Heideck surveyed the passing troops with the scrutiny of an experienced officer.

The best disciplined and appointed drew from him the exclamations of "Good! admirable!" a "Pshaw!" expressed his disapprobation. Maurice was amused by the involuntary remarks which fell from him, and which were drawn forth by the soldier's critical eye.

"Under your drilling, Count," observed the Duke, "some of these fellows, who are but raw recruits, might do me good service

in persuading the Emperor to release my unhappy father-in-law."

This was said sorrowfully and bitterly.

"It were a pity to disband them, your Highness, for they will not improve by a winter of idleness."

"Duke George will not suffer them to make a long and listless holiday," he replied; "as for my good Saxons, I can rely upon and command them into the field at any time; if Reiterstein has retired for good from the camp, he has carried with him some portion of my mercenaries, but such can be well and profitably spared, especially under such a leader; we may possibly regain the Landgrave's liberty without the aid of such marauders."

"If," said the Count, "the necessity of such forcible persuasion arises, and your Highness determines to use it, Heideck's arm, and what skill he possesses in military

tactics, shall not be wanting to aid in the good and dutiful cause.”

“Frankly then,” replied Maurice, “to you, Heideck—who will keep faithfully the thoughts and trust reposed in you—I confide, that if all other means shall fail to restore to freedom my honoured father-in-law, who unfortunately relied upon my word, which I passed because I believed I had the power to save him from the ignominy with which he has been treated, and the durance which he has suffered, it is my intent to have recourse to arms, and force the Emperor to redeem my honour, also his pledge, and to dismiss his much-abused prisoner. My reputation is tarnished by his want of faith, my integrity doubted by my kindred, my truth and rectitude denied by honest men. No, Heideck, if remonstrance, representation, and entreaty fail to produce the result I have but too long

meditated upon, laboured and waited for, and that, for the vain glory of carrying princes captive in his train like caged beasts, he still refuses to do us justice; I must to arms, nor suffer such a stigma to taint my name now and for ever. I am not willing to rush headlong to such extremes, cancelling my attachment to him, and much of obligation which I owe him. The course is painful as well as perilous, and must cost me and my subjects, who are dear to me, a heavy sacrifice."

Heideck's eye brightened, not because the Duke's probable final determination would secure to him an occasion to display his great military talents, not because he sought to revenge his own wrongs, not because success might release him from the ban which made him a beggar and an outlaw, not for all these reasons, any one of which was sufficient to influence him, without disparagement to the character

which he bore for uprightness and probity, but as an honest man, and sincerely attached to Duke Maurice, did the integrity of his heart throw light into his eyes, expand his open brow, and cause him to rejoice in the resolution which he had before heard whispered, but which was now confirmed; a resolution which would possibly punish a proceeding so treacherous on the Emperor's part, and disprove the slander of lukewarmness against one whom he honoured for his abilities, loved for his warm friendships and kindly disposition, admired for his bravery, graceful figure, and winning address.

Maurice advised Mansfeldt to remain for the present with his household in Magdeburg, declared his intention of taking Henry with him, assured Otho, to whom he had given the command of the companies left in the Town,— that he would call upon him for his services in the event of a new campaign

in the spring, and promised Clotilda that effectual means should be taken to dispossess the usurper of her rights. Five companies only, as we have stated, would be left to burthen the city.

Now then were Henry's hopes overthrown, nay worse, he must part from his beloved cousin. He was inclined to think the Countess must have been privy to the separation, when she refused to hasten his nuptials, and if so, he could not blame her precaution although it pressed so hard upon his ardent love and hopes. He must obey; he loved the Elector, and knew that in tearing him from the cherished object of his affections, he was ignorant of the penalty he was imposing upon him. He intended to consult his welfare, and would have grieved, had he known the pain he was inflicting.

At mid-day Maurice headed his Saxon subjects; and those whom he left behind

sighed as the gates closed on the last trooper.

We must now return to a less worthy personage—Hartorff; who, under the friar's skill, and the widow's nursing, was nearly convalescent. The former had done his utmost to bring him to repentance, as well as to cure his mortal ailments: none knew better than himself the necessity there was for him to amend his ways. The lieutenant bore his exhortations with tolerable temper, because he needed him, and even in his callous mind, there was a spark of human feeling, feeble as it was, towards those who had not spared themselves in order to administer to his relief; but he was too hardened in iniquity, too prone by nature and habit to vice, to entertain with more than patience the friar's admonitions. Since his delirium had left him, and his danger was past, the charitable man had shortened his visits; when the evenings set in, he was punctual, in

his attendance, and did not leave the widow's roof till the dawn : his cowl was never withdrawn till he retired from Hartorff's bed side, and seated himself in the recess formed by the projection of the chimney, or left the room to take some repose.

The lamp gave but a glimmering light, and thus Hartorff—whose thoughts were always on himself—although he had never seen his benefactor's face, took no note of the circumstance. It might be, (for our chronicle does not mention the precise time,) three days after the Elector had withdrawn his troops, that the friar, (whom we shall call Jerome), entered, at his accustomed hour, the sick man's chamber. He told his patient, that he considered his assistance no longer requisite, entreated him to bear in mind the truths he had endeavoured to impress upon him, imparted some directions for establishing his recovery, then drew forth the purse which Reiterstein had entrusted

to his charge, and gave him an account of his outlay.

Hartorff's greedy eye was on the coin, Jerome noted the eager, miser look, and acted accordingly ; for knowing him as he did, he dared not trust him. The masses happily under providence he said, were not required ; he should reserve them with the balance in his hands for the widow's use, and she would not be overpaid ; he should place the deposit with those whom he could trust, who would refund it as required and with interest, to supply the poor woman's necessities. Hartorff demanded if no portion of the sum had been left for him, to bear him on his way. The reply was no, for none was needed ; at the same time the friar restored to him a well filled purse of golden ducats, which had been found in the pocket of his doublet, out of which Jerome suggested, that in thankfulness for his recovery, which disbursement he would well

afford, he should leave some alms for the relief of the poor with whom the town abounded.

He now left him, hopeless of his reformation, or that his advice would be followed; nor did he return till Hartorff had quitted the widow's humble abode, and this he was enabled to do in the course of a few days. He was ignorant of the events which took place on the morning succeeding his misadventure, and was as much surprised when he recovered his senses, to learn the message which the Baron had left for him, as astonished that he had quitted the city, or should have stated that he, Hartorff, had any knowledge of his future movements, since nothing had, nor could have been determined between them. He could not account for his desertion from the place which contained the object of his long pursuit, at the moment too when fortune had favoured it by his unlooked for discovery of Clotilda, but he was re-

solved, to quit his bed as soon as he was able, and to put in activity every stratagem his vigilance could suggest, in order to gain some intelligence which would satisfy his conjectures.

To all his artful questions, "I know not," was the only answer he obtained from Jerome, and indeed this was truly said, for the mendicant friar concerned himself little with any temporal matters, and less with any persons save the poor, among whom he chiefly lived, and to whose wants he administered. Had it been otherwise, his knowledge of Hartorff's character would have made him cautious in his answers.

The hours passed heavily with the lieutenant; these various cogitations upon his master's extraordinary proceedings in part occupied him, but there was neither wine cup, plotting, nor mischief to fill up the tedium of his monotonous leisure. It is not wonderful, that as his returning strength

enabled him for the first time to leave his confined dwelling for the open air, he rejoiced in his release. With impatience he prepared to stroll forth, and hastily reached to take down his hat from the peg on which his careful hostess had hung it: on passing his hand round the inside to give it a better form, (for as well as its owner, it had suffered from the fall, and was somewhat out of shape,) he found a small slip of paper, fastened to the lining which his scanty learning just enabled him to decipher, "Reiterstein, or Inspruck." Here was a clue to guide him in his search for the Baron; but as he was still much in the dark, and his ideas of obedience or attachment did not show him the necessity of blindly following that master's directions so implicitly as to depart in ignorance of so much that he wished to know, he determined, even if fit for travel, to delay till his curiosity should be satisfied. His first movement

was to the stable, where he had left his horse; when he assured himself that he had been well cared for, he turned into a wine shop, one of his usual haunts. There he learned that the army had finally decamped from before Magdeburg; and that Mansfeldt remained in the city; all was as if no siege had ever been; the country people were passing to and fro to the market, the porters were carrying their burthens, the mechanics plying their trades, and the churches receiving their congregations; he ascertained the force left, and the name of its commander; on the third day of his perambulations, which were more particularly confined to the neighbourhood of the Castle, he encountered Thumelda. Before she was aware of his proximity, he was by her side, and without ceremony addressed her. She started at the voice which accosted her; although not devoid of some belief in spirits, none could have created in

her so much alarm as the wicked one now beside her. Her beauty had made an impression on his imagination when he first saw her, a fact he had carefully concealed from the Baron when he found that his inclinations tended the same way ; but as the fancy had passed from his superior, he was willing to take advantage of the opportunity thus unexpectedly afforded him. Konrad had been an object of hatred to him on this account, as well as from jealousy at the preference the Baron had shown for his society, from his superior education which rendered him a more fitting companion for his commander, and the eagerness he had shown to detain him in his service.

He pretended much surprise at the meeting, and congratulated himself upon his good luck. Thumelda was too much terrified at the rencontre to make him any reply, but moved forward as quickly as her trem-

bling limbs would permit her. Hartorff kept pace with her, and still persecuted her with his professions, questions, and odious declarations. At last, compelled to speak and in the hope of ridding herself of him, she desired him to leave her.

“Pardon me, Mistress Thumelda, I am too gallant a soldier to quit so pretty a lass, and one so much to my taste, when fortune has been so kind as to throw her in my way.”

“I do not want your protection or your conversation,” she replied; “therefore go your way, and cease to molest me.”

Thumelda had turned in the direction of the Castle, but as the street which led to it was deserted, she feared to venture down it; she had been so rarely in the town, and knew so little of its bye-ways, or any persons in it, that even if she retraced her steps, she was not acquainted with any one to whom she could apply for assistance.

At this moment, some of Hartorff's boon companions sallied forth from a neighbouring wine house. He called to them :

“Here, gentlemen, what think you? my wife refuses to bear me company home. I have been in search of her these three hours past.”

“It is false,” screamed Thumelda, “I am no wife of his.”

“But you are pretty enough,” observed one, “to be the choice of any man who prizes good looks.”

“She is my wife,” roared the lieutenant, “and must come with me, so I beg, my friends, you will assist me to teach her her duty, for I fear her claws, which full well I know she can use upon such occasions.”

Thumelda, as they caught hold of her, was almost frantic; spite of entreaty, denial, and cries, they surrounded and hurried her

on towards an obscure part of the suburbs of the town. Vainly she called for help; her appeals were stifled by Hartorff's placing his hand across her mouth; luckily her last scream, with the hurrying steps of the party, had drawn the attention of some passengers. A crowd soon collected, and followed. Amongst these, was a lacquey belonging to Mansfeldt's household. He caught sight of Thumelda's dress, by which he believed it to be her, for she had bid him a friendly "Good morrow," as she went out. He pushed through the crowd, and found he was not mistaken. He now called upon the bystanders to assist in releasing the poor girl, but Hartorff and his fellows kept them at bay, repeating the falsehood, and adding to it, that the fellow who took her part, had enticed her away from her husband which the other stoutly denied. A general confusion ensued, and the issue for

Thumelda was doubtful, when Otho suddenly rode up.

“What is this?” he exclaimed.

A hundred voices answered him with different versions. One said, a man carrying home his runaway wife, another, no such thing, when Thumelda’s first champion left her, and pushing through the mob, came as close as its jostling members permitted, and called at the top of his voice :

“Mistress Thumelda, Sir Otho, help for her.”

In one moment, Otho dashed his horse into the midst of the throng, which opened right and left, the people making way to save themselves from its iron-shod hoofs.

As he got sight of poor Thumelda, who was no longer able to call for help, he cried :

“Seize the villains, seize them.”

He made for Hartorff, whose gaunt figure met his eye, as he was still trying to force

the half fainting girl through the mass of people. He had seen him but once before, when he had entered the city with Reiterstein; but he had not forgotten him, and knew him but too well by name. He called loudly to the trooper who was with him to secure the fellow, but the lieutenant finding he had one in authority to deal with, and one whom he knew would be quickly obeyed, did not linger to be captured. He released his hold and fled with such precipitation, that in a few seconds he was safe from pursuit. He made for the stable, lost not a moment in saddling his horse, called hurriedly at the widow's for his cloak, and in an hour had left Magdeburg some miles behind him. His companions, less fortunate, were seized, amidst the shouts and hisses of the people, and led off to finish their day, and spend their night in the town prison.

Otho asked Thumelda no questions, but

dismounting with the friendly assistance of the lacquey, deposited her safely at the Castle and then went in pursuit of Hartorff.

The prisoners could give no tidings of him ; he told them she was his wife, and they believed him. They might with some truth have said they chose to believe him.

Clotilda's distress was great when she received her faithful companion in such a state. Her clothes were torn, she was exhausted, her face deadly pale, and her hair disordered ; till restoratives applied had brought her to some composure, she could not relieve her lady's anxiety as to the cause of the pitiable condition in which she had returned.

Otho's search occupied him some hours. He heard at length that a man answering the description given of Hartorff, had been seen riding from the town at a brisk pace. Every stable was sought out, and at length the

fact was ascertained, that he had hastily called for his horse. Little doubt remained that the reprobate had absconded ; this was a comfort to the poor maiden, and those concerned for her.

CHAPTER XIII.

NOVEMBER was advancing to a close. Henry, as the camp broke up, on the next day but one after Maurice quitted Magdeburg, unwillingly tore himself away, joined the Elector, and accompanied him to Wittemberg.

Clotilda had one care to cloud her bright days, and repress the mirthful laugh as it rose to her lips. Her child—her separation from her darling boy—when she thought on his infant ways, his childish endearments,

given to others, lost to her, on the mother's love which was not there to watch over and guard his light slumbers, pray by his couch, catch his waking smiles, and receive the soft caress; when she thought on the mother's duties, and the mother's joys delegated to others, the unbidden moisture would damp the pale roses on her cheek, the unconscious sigh break from her bosom; her happier thoughts were centered in her husband. Otho's high qualities and varied accomplishments shone daily more conspicuously, and daily called forth the love and admiration of those around him.

Mansfeldt and the Countess loved Henry as their son, and most worthy was the frank and true hearted youth to be thus cherished by them, but they sometimes wished in comparing him with Otho, that his energetic vivacity had been tempered with the other's consideration; for although he was cheerful—at times even gay, yet in his most mirthful

moods, he never trespassed upon, drew forth, or taunted the weaknesses of others ; but studied their feelings, and tolerated their peculiarities. With him, temper did not prompt the sneering or bitter speech, nor tempt him to touch upon subjects, which could give pain : he was never betrayed into a partial forgetfulness that good temper, benevolence, and unselfishness, are the main ingredients of good breeding. If he was melancholy, he did not intrude his sadness ; he was brave, but merciful, injustice alone provoked his wrath, falsehood and deceit his contempt : can we wonder at Clotilda's devotion to such a man ? When her apprehensions, and a wish to regain possession of her child drew forth a sigh, he quieted her fears and gently answered her longings.

“ We must put trust in the Father, beloved one, when he deems it safe, he will give him to our arms.”

He concealed his own, although he deeply shared in her apprehensions.

Thumelda often turned her thoughts in fond remembrance to her parents, and her home; happily she did not know of the disaster which had been brought upon them since they parted. To the Father only had Maurice communicated the intelligence which Hendrick had brought from the mill; thus those most interested were spared a recital which would have robbed them of all repose.

Mansfeldt and Otho found occupation in the discharge of their several duties; the people were attached to a Governor, who had so ably and valiantly defended them, and upheld their rights; he sought and gained their regard; he was popular without cringing to the voices of idle, meddling brawlers; they found him ever ready and willing to redress their just complaints and grievances, and relieve their

wants but prompt to repress with firmness their disorders; and thus the rigorous winter blossomed with the fruits of peace, when nature's summer produce, sent by the providing hand of Providence, had been trampled to the earth, and rotted in blood by the discords and contentions of ungrateful man, who brings upon himself that misery, privation, and desolation, of which he would complain if inflicted by an unfruitful season, sent from the hand of Him, who tempers his chastisements and extends his mercies. Man, unthankful man, who arraigns and outrages high Heaven by reproaches for the sorrows to which his vices, follies, imprudence, and improvidence alone have subjected him,—who wearies the throne of Grace anew with his supplications for temporal goods which in his thoughtless wantonness he has discarded,—heeds not the warning given, persists in sins forbidden, defies the threats, denounces the hopes, but

condemns, repines at, and resists the punishment. Of such we have not now to speak, of such it is not our present tale to tell, or a deserved retribution to recount; the trials of Otho and Clotilda had been many, but with thankfulness in their hearts for the daily mercies they received, they bent together in lowly meekness at the altar, to pour forth in acknowledgment and humble thanksgiving, that though their deserts were few their blessings were manifold. As hand in hand they rose from the holy spot, the benign face of Augustine beamed mildly, with fatherly love upon them; in silence he spread his hands over them invoking, by an inward prayer, Heaven's blessings upon them, and also in silence he preceded them down the long and lofty aisle, and accompanied them to the Castle. Here they found Mansfeldt, the Countess, and Mathilda, who had been to offer up their prayers with equal devotion at their holy place of worship.

Augustine left them, and in a few moments returned, followed by Krantz and Thumelda. He placed in the mother's arms her child, the parents gazed in rapture on the beautiful boy, pressed him with fond fervour to their bosoms, twined his tiny arms around their necks, and passed their fingers through his curly, glossy hair—but spoke not—joy hath few words. None would approach, till the first burst of feeling had subsided. The good father looked upon them with pious satisfaction. Thumelda leaning on her father's arm, and pressing closer and closer to his side, viewed alternately with unalloyed delight her parent and the group before her, while the tear stood in the clear grey eye of the sturdy Krantz, who wiped not the drop away, too consciously brave and manly to deny or disguise this testimony from the heart. A precious gem so pure and passionless could not reflect the stigma even of momentary weakness, though it were glistening in a hero's eye.

At length, calmed from their first transports, Clotilda gave her hand to Krantz, who respectfully kissed the honoured offering, then drawing naerer to the Countess—who stood apart that she might not interrupt their first moments of enjoyment with their restored treasure—said :

“ My Otho, joy has made us selfish.”

She approached to present the smiling cherub. The Count, as he looked on the lovely boy, turned pale ; the Countess was bathed in tears, but when Clotilda held the child near her that she might kiss his rosy lips, she gazed for a moment in agony, uttered a low moan, and fell senseless on the couch by which she was standing.

In alarm they all gathered round her.

“ Leave her to me,” said the Count mournfully, then raising her with the assistance of Otho and Mathilda, he bore her into the next apartment. Otho returned and closed the door. The heavy sighs and

sobs which before long reached them, with the comforting voices of her husband and child, told them that nature had found relief. They would not invade the privacy they seemed to seek for the sufferer, nor ask an explanation, which Mansfeldt appeared to avoid, of this sudden illness.

The day was cold, the Countess was not strong, and had endured much anxiety. The scene of such a meeting had doubtless been too much for her; when Mansfeldt returned, he expressed his sorrow that such an unforeseen interruption at so joyful a moment should have distressed them. The father now related that, by Maurice's direction, accompanied by Konrad and a sufficient escort he had departed for Reiterstein, the moment after he last quitted them: he was anxious to get the start of the Baron, who he knew would be compelled to wait until the following day for the payment of his regiment, there was no object now to be

gained by a longer separation from their child; he had cautioned Otho in the few minutes' conversation he had with him, to conceal the reason of his hasty departure, that neither apprehension of the long journey, nor doubts whether and when her child might arrive, should harass the mother's mind. He had travelled rapidly to Reiterstein, but for the sake of the boy—and owing to the longer route which they had decided upon to take to avoid the chance of encountering the Baron, (in case he should bend his steps to the same point, as Maurice expected he would do in order to throw a garrison into his castle and overawe the neighbourhood)—their journey back had been more tedious.

“And our abode,” said Krantz, “is turned into a military station, that we may watch his movements, and prevent his forcing payment of the monies due to you, my honoured lady,” addressing Clotilda. “A small force is quartered and divided

between the village and the mill. The Baron will not dare to take an offensive part against the Elector's troops, though in numbers probably inferior to his own: thus I could leave my home with confidence that its inmates were secure. I have given strict charge that none of them shall wander beyond the precincts of the mill. Notice has been given that neither tribute nor rent for any lands not pertaining to the fief are to be paid to him: he will hereafter have to account for what he has already exacted, and they say his parsimonious savings will enable him to make an ample restitution, and leave a surplus. Some proceeds from the estates we have already received."

Thumelda now heard of the peril her family had escaped; Lewis was recovered, and had returned to Leipsic, "and Ludwig, the faithful Ludwig," cried Clotilda and her gentle maiden at the same time.—

"Has been the careful nurse of your boy

on his journey," replied Augustine; "he was so unhappy at being compelled to remain in the Baron's service, and as no necessity now exists for his doing so, that his father and Krantz consented to release him from the obligation which they had for a time imposed on him. It was not safe for him, after his desertion from the Castle, to remain in the neighbourhood; I assure you he is a tender and watchful nurse, as young Lewis's looks testify."

Ludwig was sent for to receive thanks from the parents of his young charge.

Reiterstein, after he quitted Hartorff, lost no time in mustering his men, and leading them forth from the city, repaired with them to the camp. Few of the tents had been struck; there he dismissed them. galled and restless, he paused but to give hurried orders, put his horse into a gallop, and scoured the plain. After an hour of hard riding, he cried furiously:

“This is folly,” then drew short his rein ; his horse, by the violent jerk, was thrown so far back on his haunches, that the rider nearly bit the dust. He gave a hoarse laugh, defied the danger, and again dug deep the rowels of his spurs into the poor animal’s sides, and impelled him some distance forward at redoubled speed ; by degrees he relaxed his pace, and wheeling round, scarcely retaining the bridle in his hand, which hung loosely over the mane, slowly retraced his way. His looks were haggard, his lips tightly compressed ; he lifted his eyes—which hitherto had been bent on the ground—to the fortifications before him, and raising himself upright in his stirrups, shook his clenched fist as if in menace at their grey towers, uttering deep maledictions on those who had driven him thence defeated and disgraced. Never had he experienced such a signal repulse, such deep humiliation ; in his insolence, he had more

than once dared by implication to taunt the Elector, but of all men living, he was the one whom he most feared, the one who had the most power to control his actions, to thwart and crush his plans. For the overthrow he had experienced, for the deep affront he had received, he was not prepared; years of dissimulation and fraud were exposed by him to whom he believed they never would be known; rebuffed, discarded before his enemies, in presence of those who had suffered most from his machinations, what further facts of his former life from evidence or hearsay might not be registered in the archives of the Elector's memory, and written there in indelible characters to be brought hereafter against him? The deeds too, which Father Augustine had placed in the Duke's hands, he could never hope to recover; and the restitution of revenues with which he was threatened—he had no power to revenge, and if he pos-

essed the power, the exercise of it would be useless to remedy his blasted projects. From all these discomfitures and every part of his failure, he could not abstract his thoughts, nor reflect with any calmness upon the means to repair in part so many evils. He reached his own quartres, and casting the bridle of his reeking horse to one of his troopers near at hand, rushed into his tent, wiped the clammy moisture from his forehead, and writhed like one possessed by a demon upon his couch; again he started to his feet, and calling loudly for his servitors, demanded wine. The trembling youth who answered his impatient summons, and who dreaded the weight of his stern master's hand, quickly obeyed the call, and as quickly executed the command, glad to escape the bursting of the thunder cloud, which lowered upon the Baron's brow, and threatened a pitiless storm. Goblet succeeded goblet, till spent

by passion, and overcome by wine, his senses for some hours were in abeyance.

The return of day brought with it no light for him, no dawn to cheer his prospects. To keep so strong a force as he now mustered in his pay, threatened as he was with ruin, was impossible; such could be collected at any time; they were a motley crew, and newly levied, nor did he require one third of the number; their dismissal therefore was decided on. He lost no time in seeking Duke George, told him his intent to disband the greater part of his regiment, and to retire himself with a chosen few; made a composition with him for horses and appointments, then sought the Elector's chancellor, demanded the arrears for his men, mustered and disbanded them to enter Duke George's service if they preferred to do so. With a hundred of the best disciplined and most hardy, leisurely he bent his course—as Maurice had fore-

told he would do—to Reiterstein. Here new mortification and disappointment awaited him ; as he passed onward to the village, soldiers, chosen from the Elector's veteran Saxons, were loitering before the door of the gast-haus, leaning over the low parapet of the bridge, and sauntering along the road, met his eye, and proved that Maurice's words were not idle ones. Rage was gnawing his heart, but awaiting with apparent calmness till his men had filed over the bridge, he dressed them in good order in front of the gast-haus, and rode slowly up the winding steep into the Castle yard. Here, at any rate, some small consolation greeted him ; never had he seen all things in such good order, or in such perfect repair ; nothing had been neglected, nothing carelessly done ; it seemed as if his presence had been looked for ; who had ordered and seen to the execution of all this ? Ludwig, he was answered. But why was Ludwig

not at his post? where was he to receive the praise his diligence merited? no one knew, no one could tell. At the dawn three days before he was missing, but whither gone they could not say. He had given general directions and commanded Brandt to be diligent. Soon after the soldiers had marched into the village, and were quartered, some there, some at the mill, he had disappeared. They were peaceable and well ordered, had molested no one, were friendly with all, and not one had made any attempt to approach the Castle. Brandt observed, he supposed they were sent there to keep holiday; they drank moderately (that was according to Brandt's calculation, who never stinted his own allowance) of mine host's beer and wine. They had made provisions somewhat scarce, but paid for what they had; he doubted if they knew themselves the object of their being sent; if they did, they feigned well their ignorance,

but they seemed tired of their recreation, for save the occasional exchange of some of the men to and from the mill, they seldom wandered from the village.

Reiterstein looked blank and ceased further enquiry. Too well he could explain these things, which puzzled the brains of Brandt, but the sudden absence of Ludwig was a problem he could not himself solve; perhaps he had gone in haste to seek and give him intelligence.

The Baron had no apprehension of an attack upon his Castle; he knew Maurice better; if such had been his intention he would have sent a more adequate force and ordered prompt measures, for although he chose to sneer at his delay before Magdeburg, he was aware that policy—the soundness of which had been proved—and not the habit of dilatory manœuvres, had caused him not to press the siege. No, these men were sent as spies to cage and keep him in

check while he remained in his own fortress. In the morning he rode forth; all was as on the previous evening, but he soon learned that his finances would not be replenished, or his expenses supported by the revenues from lands which he had so long usurped, and of which he was now dispossessed. He rode in the direction of the mill; there again all was in tranquillity, the labourers employed as usual, but the damage he had done to the dwelling had been repaired, and it was now in a better state than before. The soldiers scattered round the premises took little notice of him, except by a respectful salutation.

The protection of the soldiers was a great comfort to Theresa, whose terror of the dark Baron and fear of the vengeance he would take upon her husband, kept her in continual alarm; since Clotilda first sought an asylum under their roof, she had ceased to be the blithe and merry body she had

been before ; she was care-worn, thoughtful, and spoke almost in whispers, as if she feared to awaken some savage beast of prey, or that she might lose some sound which would warn her of approaching danger.

The miller, grieved to see the partner of his youth and the comfort of his fire-side thus languid, redoubled his kindness and tried to banish those fears which were not for herself, but him. With satisfaction she saw their boy depart though scarcely convalescent, for at Leipsic she knew he would be safe ; she hoped that Thumelda was now equally removed from harm ; the security they enjoyed brought back the merry jest, the joyous laugh, and light snatches of gay songs ; she busied herself with untiring zeal to make her guests comfortable and succeeded so well, that those quartered in the village looked to the rotation of exchange with eagerness. Without sollicita-

tion they offered to give their share of the labour required, in order to forward any additional work going on at the mill ; and as they gathered round the wide chimney corner in an evening, those who had partaken in the fray which had so nearly ended fatally to the house and its inmates, loved to repeat the tale of its attack and their resistance. This was no tax upon their memories, for the wounds received by Carl and Gantz although healed, still reminded them when the cold blast blew over the heath, that the pain did not pass entirely with the cure. Theresa's gratitude to them for their brave defence of herself and her son, and theirs for her indefatigable nursing day and night, had so firmly cemented their mutual regard and good will, that the distinctions of master, mistress, and servant, were nearly abandoned in the interest they took in each other's welfare.

The honest Krantz, till his departure with Augustine worked harder than ever, and allowed himself no indulgence in which his means would not permit him to offer them a participation ; the soldiers after hearing a recital of their courageous conduct told by Schultz and confirmed by Theresa, thought their present companions worthy to serve even their brave Maurice.

The good pastor and his wife lamented their separation from their young charge, who had become endeared to them ; wondered why he was brought if he was to be so soon removed, but the affection of their good and dutiful Konrad, was a blessing which lightened this transient disappointment. With the delicacy of those of more refined habits, they abstained from questions. Ludwig came for him as he had left him, without making any observation. Krantz had given them notice that they must give him up

when demanded: he left a sum in acknowledgment of the care they had taken of him which had added many comforts to their humble dwelling.

CHAPTER XIV.

WHEN Hartorff believed himself safe from pursuit, he considered it unnecessary to persist in his present speed, but that it would be prudent to leave the more beaten track, still keeping as near as he could in the direction he had proposed to take: a small stream lay in his path, this he readily forded; just beyond this narrow boundary, the ground rose gradually till it formed an eminence which commanded a view of those plains beneath from which he had just di-

verged. He dismounted, keeping in front of his horse that his figure might be less conspicuous to those in the level country, supposing any should have thought it worth while to continue their search for him.

When he had attained this elevation, he found the country on the other side again sink into a valley, which was covered for some miles with a thick wood. He remounted and made for this shelter; having ridden some distance under its friendly covert, he selected a convenient spot for his horse to browse, and still retaining the bridle in his hand sat down on a bank to hold commune with himself as to the most judicious manner of proceeding for his own interest. During Thumelda's struggle to free himself from him he had torn off a small locket, which was suspended by a ribbon from her neck; this he now remembered, and drew from his pocket; it contained hair with a K, rather

rudely scratched on the inside; he did not doubt it was a love token from Konrad, and was about to trample it under foot when another thought seemed to occur to him. With a malicious grin, he concealed it carefully in the lining of his doublet; he then set himself to reflect upon his plans.

It seemed to him that the Baron's star had ceased to be in the ascendant, and the question was, whether it would be better to join him according to his directions, or to leave him before it should sink below the horizon of his good fortune. His conscience would present no obstacle to any association or service which might hold out more lucrative prospects; he had never scrupled to draw liberally upon him for as much as would enable him to indulge in his dissipations; he could not complain either of any restraint put upon him, (for he always managed by trickery, threats, arguments, or insolence, to have his own way, and

often made his commander submit to that way :) the question was, could he do better? his doubts respecting the present state of the Baron's affairs, which had given rise to these cogitations, disabled him equally from coming to any decision. He had in possession a purse well plenished with ducats, his master's horse, and his master's secrets, with an easy conscience and plenty of assurance:—a good stock in trade he considered for a man bent upon pushing his fortune. It was clear from the directions left in his hat, that Reiterstein was no longer with the Duke, but whether so suddenly absconding had been his voluntary act, in consequence of the army being disbanded, was the question? if such had been the case, why quit it before that event took place? why mention Inspruck? He had no predilection for being cooped up in Reiterstein even for the winter months, much less for an indefinite period. Should he at once

make for Inspruck? if he did so, and the Baron not there, he should miss his errand and spend his money, for he knew that he should not be re-imbursed for his disobedience of orders. A new thought struck him; what if he made a *détour* by Wittemberg, to which place report said the Elector was gone? he might pick up some intelligence useful to decide his future movements, and which would be acceptable to the Baron in the event of his joining him, and cover his own irregularity: indeed it was at his option to mention his having been there at all, as the lamentable state in which he was when the Baron quitted him, left him to his own discretion as to time. While he was passing these matters in review, the night was closing in and hunger was becoming troublesome; there was every prospect that he must shelter supperless—and without other covering than his cloak, in his present quarters; in fact it was already too dark

to pursue his journey. Removing his horse's bridle, he examined his pistols; it was not long before a young hare rewarded his accurate aim, and was timely provided to appease his craving. It was soon prepared and swinging on three cross sticks over the embers of a fire, composed of the dead wood which was abundantly scattered around. While his supper was thus in progress, he managed to cut down some boughs wherewith to form a tolerable shelter; water was at hand; his cooking—and soon after his meal—completed, he replenished his fire, and crept into his lair. We will leave him to enjoy his bivouac on a cold night in November; we need not report the after stages of his journey, his personal accommodation being neither a necessary recital, nor likely to interest our readers; suffice it to say, that after a circuitous route, he found himself not far from the gates of Wittemberg, endeavouring to lay out in

his own mind a map of his future proceedings. While thus engaged, a horseman struck into the main road from a byepath at some distance before him. He soon made that distance less, but still kept sufficiently in the rear that the clatter of his charger's heavy trot might not attract attention, and cause the stranger to turn round, while he in following could make his own observations, for in his present position to be on his guard was to ensure self-preservation. He was conscious that he was in some sort thrusting himself into the lion's den, therefore he slouched his hat more over his face and drew his cloak carefully around him. These were not needless precautions. .

The figure in advance of him resembled that of Konrad; the horse, if not black John, must be his duplicate. His doubts did not endure long, for when the rider turned round as if to view the bearings of the country he had just quitted, Hartorff

had no hesitation as to the identity of Horn Book, as he designated him. Konrad did not appear to notice him; indeed the other was too closely enveloped to be recognised, even at the few yards which were between the secretary and his self-constituted groom.

He continued to ride on at a moderate though steady pace, till he cleared the gates of the town. As many were passing through, the lieutenant contrived to do the same without exciting any particular attention. He watched Konrad till he entered the Castle, then returned and put up his horse at a small inn in the suburbs, partook of some refreshment, and sallied forth again into the city to make himself master of its localities. In this way the rest of the day was spent. On the succeeding one he turned his attention to a review and alteration of his apparel. In the scuffle it had suffered some damage by rent, in his travel some disfigurement from soil, and

thus the gloss of newness was now a record of many months' standing.

Hartorff's countenance was stamped rogue in such plain characters, that rogues did not attempt to overreach him; he was suspected and avoided by honest men; his face was a passport to the unscrupulous as a companion of their own calling; the unsuspecting generally paid for their hardihood if they disregarded the instinct which taught them avoidance, for the sign hung out on his features did not promise more than would be found within.

With these personal advantages for making a bargain, he obtained from the Jews a substantial burgher suit of broad brown cloth moderately laced, short cloak, hat, and hose, at a more reasonable price than another could have done, and congratulated himself that he had not changed his money to a disadvantage. He now got his hair, beard, and eyebrows trimmed to correspond,

burgher fashion, he assumed a slight stoop, discarded every military appearance, then returned to his lodging, dressed himself in his recently acquired apparel, found a tailor to repair his fractured garments, and removed himself and his horse into a better quarter of the town. At the inn he represented himself as a burgher from Ghent, but declined to traffic till he had become more acquainted with the commerce of the city; for as he was in easy circumstances, he could afford himself some leisure; moderate gains at small games kept his purse tolerably replenished, without incurring suspicion of mal-practices, nor did he confine the contributions he thus levied to one quarter of the city. He had no desire to encounter Konrad, but kept spy upon his movements; when he occasionally caught a glimpse of him, he was generally alone. Couriers were continually coming and going in haste, but as to the object of their jour-

nies, the lieutenant found no one who could reply satisfactorily to the many artful questions which he proposed to them. They supposed—they imagined—they guessed—as men do, who are ashamed to confess ignorance before a stranger as he professed himself to be, upon the events passing in their own city or perhaps in their neighbour's house, which nevertheless may be no part of their business to enquire into or know. He found some of their conjectures improbable, some he knew could not be true, some such as would not answer his purpose if true, and those that would, not based upon a foundation sufficiently accurate for his guidance. One general assertion was made and one belief pervaded all classes, that Maurice was unhappy at the long detention of the Landgrave of Hesse, and galled beyond measure that he had failed in all his negotiations and remonstrances to obtain his liberation.

In this state of uncertainty he remained for three days, and began to debate upon the propriety of beating a retreat, although most unwilling to do so. He could not carry on the character he had assumed much longer without incurring suspicion, for it would soon become notorious that he neither associated with merchants, nor had merchandise to dispose of. Each day he bartered for, and made some alteration in his dress and appearance, till Hartorff could scarcely be recognised as Hartorff.

He had again changed his quarters, on pretence of being nearer to his business; the town was far too full, the people too glad their brave Elector had returned, and too eager to take advantage of the concourse of persons now assembled, and to advance their own concerns, to take much note of a stranger, who was more sparing of his cash and his communications, than of his questions; neither since his metamorphosis was

there anything remarkable in his person to attract attention. He looked much what he professed to be, a trader in easy circumstances.

On the fourth afternoon after his arrival, feeling rather depressed and wavering as to the success of the step he had taken, he wandered to that unfailing resource for the idle, the bridge, and was soon diverted from other thoughts by watching the struggles which the small craft on the river were making to free themselves from the ice which had already begun to impede the navigation of the Elbe, listening to the vociferation of the boatmen, and viewing their efforts to gain a landing and secure their boats before nightfall. This sight was a gratifying pastime to the taste of the looker-on; the annoyances of others were ever subjects of merriment to him; he loved to see his own species struggle and fail, as had often been his own fate; as his con-

science was generally, from long practice, under his control, he could stifle its warnings, when occasionally it would rebel, to point out that his disappointments were not undeserved; but this unusual effort of his monitor, instead of creating or awakening any good feeling, only provoked and stirred him up the more to rejoice in the failure and the misery of those more worthy than himself; he was so deeply absorbed by the objects and the contests below, that the passengers on the bridge shared for the present no portion of his attention, when a smart tap on the shoulder, and "Make way for the Elector," curtailed his amusement, and pointed out to him the necessity of taking some heed to his self-preservation. He was obliged to stand upright, and like a pilaster press close to the parapet. There was no time to rush forward, for some horsemen had passed as soon as the word was spoken, and others in the rear choked up

the whole way, so that there was more danger of his being effectually flattened against the wall, than that the ice would crush the frail barks in the river below. The other passengers aware of the approaching cavalcade, had turned and left the bridge, or had passed rapidly forward, so that the sham burgher was the only person likely to be endangered by the advancing company. The grooms were as heedless of Hartorff's danger, as Hartorff would have been of theirs under similar circumstances; but Maurice—who was never wanton of human life, and who never punished with death, when necessity did not demand its sacrifice—called to them to halt.

“See ye not the man?” he cried; “take more heed, varlets.”

The horsemen who were in front pressing on the lieutenant, reined in, and by Maurice's command filed over the bridge two abreast, himself performing the same ma-

nœuvre, thereby releasing Hartorff from his dangerous position. After they were passed, he continued to gaze on the receding horsemen, and rubbing his hands with a chuckling laugh, said in an under tone :

“ Schwendi with him, this is good ; if I know anything of draughts, while the Colonel plays his game at Wittenberg, master Maurice will not be crowned King.”

This reflection seemed to afford him so much satisfaction, that boat or boatmen no longer engaged his surveillance ; he paraded backwards and forwards for some time, and then repaired to one of those resorts, (to seek an opponent at his favourite game,) where drinking and gambling go hand in hand to assist the trade of sharpers and ruin the unwary. He did not long wait for an adversary : a man soon presented himself as a challenger ; he was of rather low stature and slender form, about forty, with a suppleness of body and gesture, serpentlike ;

his cap was set so much on one side of his head, that it overshadowed an eye and part of his face, so that his profile could not have been accurately limned on that side, nor could the cast of his full face be obtained by a front view; the one eye which was visible, was rarely lifted to the person with whom he conversed; he seemed, either from defective sight or habit, to keep it half closed; his mouth, rather drawn down at the sides, gave a gravity and discontented expression to the lower part of his countenance; his voice was low, but distinct, his speech deliberate, with a slight foreign accent; he made a waving bow to Hartorff, and commenced quietly to place the men, his small fingers gliding almost imperceptibly over the board. Hartorff saw in this simple preliminary, that he would have one to oppose his skill who was accustomed to the game, he therefore declined the wine cup as a prelude to their play. The game

proceeded, and the lieutenant's men disappeared from the chequered board, he hardly knew how, before the traps his opponent laid for him; he raised his eyes from the game and observed, looking in his adversary's face :

“I doubt friend, but I have found in you my match.”

“Those who play for kings sometimes do,” replied the other drily, removing a man whom Hartorff had pushed forward for promotion. The expression of his mouth as he said this was peculiar. As they advanced in their play, the lieutenant was of opinion that his kreutzers were in jeopardy, when some movement in the room drew for a moment the attention of the other from the board, “A huff,” cried Hartorff, sweeping off two men.

“What! you guilty of an oversight, Master Bortoni? I reckon you'll pocket a huff more

quietly than the loss of your money, or your reputation for playing a deep game."

In the speaker Hartorff recognised Hendrick's voice, and kept his head bent down.

"What! you back so soon, friend Hendrick? what news do you bring?"

"All that concerns you, Master Bortoni; that the Emperor continues to pay his spies well; the rest of my news is contained in the despatches I have delivered with my own hands," (this was said with a malicious smile) "to the Elector, which I did not read by the way to sell the contents to you for your Master's information."

"Perhaps, Master Hendrick, you are indebted to your ignorance for your honesty."

"Or," interrupted Hendrick, "that a certain person was not at my elbow in the shape of Master Bortoni, to help my deficiency, or bribe me out of my trust."

Turning on his heel he left the com-

batants to finish their game, not appearing to have noticed Hartorff, whose back was towards him.

“A rough chap,” observed Bortoni, with an enquiring look at his companion.

“So it seems,” replied Hartorff, “and not over respectful in his comparisons or remarks.”

“He is not one of us,” answered the other, bowing graciously, “merely a rough-random soldier; such blind tools are useful at the court of Wittemberg.”

“He pretends then to be sharper than he is,” said Hartorff, “he seems to be a blustering fellow.”

“You say truly good burgher, for I believe you are one of that respectable body from Ghent, how fare matters in that part of the world?”

“At present I know not,” quoth Hartorff, “it is some time since I left that city, and

may be long before I return, if, as I propose, I should travel south."

"Perhaps some rare manufacture for the Emperor's notice."

"Just so," said Hartorff.

"Hum! I fear I cannot stake with you again to-night, master burgher," at the same time laying on the table a half thaler; "to-morrow, at the same hour, if it suits you."

Hartorff looked at the coin, and made a move to give the change; but the other, who saw his wish to retain the whole, repeated "To-morrow," and glided from the room.

Hartorff sat for some time, revolving with complacency in his mind what had passed. It was pretty evident that Bortoni was not in Maurice's service; who he might be, he must exert his wits to find out. Having quaffed and refreshed himself with the wine which the other had provided but left un-

touched, he strolled forth to consider how he should come at the knowledge of this fact, which it concerned him so much to know. He was at a loss where or to whom to direct his inquiries; for, be it remembered, he was still a stranger in the city, and in his assumed character must direct his researches with caution.

Accident gave him a clue which was valuable for his guidance, although it did not lead at once to the discovery of the points upon which he desired to be informed. As he turned the corner of a narrow street into one of the main thoroughfares, he saw Hendrick parading up and down before a tavern, as if waiting for the arrival of some one. He advanced cautiously; and while the trooper was beyond the tavern with his back to him, he slipped into the house, and soon ensconced himself in an obscure corner of the common room, no part of which could boast much light, as the day was on the

wane, and the narrow casements at any time admitted but a small portion of this Father of Nature.

No one had observed his entrance ; feigning sleep, he listened for some time to Hendrick's measured tramp, as the clank of his heavy sword every now and then hit against his long spurs. A hearty voice of greeting in the trooper's deep tones, assured him that the friend for whom he was waiting had arrived ; but some minutes elapsed before they entered the room where the lieutenant had secured his listening position. The two or three persons who were sitting at the table drinking when he first stole in, having emptied their cups and resumed their caps, rose to pay their reckoning and depart. Hendrick called to mine host and bade him use despatch, for it was time for him to visit his quarters.

As the trooper stooped to enter the low doorway, he addressed his companion :

“ Well, Master Konrad, how find you our Elector’s city of Wittemberg ? Why, man,” eyeing him from head to foot, “ you do not fatten in his service.”

“ I have like you Hendrick, had much hard riding, and the Elector, as you know, keeps late vigils.”

“ Ay, and early matins too Konrad ; and in good truth, he hath need to keep his eyes open, and those in his service their tongues idle, while he is so besieged in his own capital by spies. By my sword, if I were he, but I would tie them with a hempen cord into a bundle, and chuck the vermin over the bridge like garbage, to feed the fishes.”

“ Not so easy, Hendrick ; the Elector desires peace ; and this cast into the Elbe, which you recommend as a lodging for the Emperor’s subjects who are sent to him as guests, would be likely to cast him into a war. He will not manage matters, believe me, after your fashion ; although I should

be right glad myself to see Schwendi, his wily valet, and some others I could name abiding at the court, on their road to In-spruck."

"If I had them tied to my stirrup-leathers, I would help their speed," cried Hendrick in wrath. "I found that snaky Italian fellow Bortoni at his tricks to-night, and longed to twist his pliable body into a knot and send him out of the window. His oily tongue and bright thalers will corrupt half the population, if he be suffered to prowl about like a jackal as he is, into every corner, and at all hours as he does. It would be useless to thrash the fellow; you might as well cudgel a leathern bag stuffed with chaff, for I verily believe he hath no bones. The impudent varlet had the hardihood, too, to call me friend! — Friend, indeed! I would as soon drain the cup of good fellowship with the demon of the Hartz as with him."

“ He has wasted some of his civilities on me,” responded Konrad; “ but when I see him approaching, I flourish my ashen cudgel (which taught that prince of rogues and bullies Hartorff, manners) at arm’s length round my head, and keep him at a respectful distance.”

“ By the bye, Konrad,” interrupted the trooper, “ I measured the flat of my sword upon the long back of that imp of darkness you have mentioned, and gave him a taste of the strength of my arm, which he did not, I fancy, forget for a while.”

“ I have a long story to tell you,” said Konrad, “ of what occurred just after you started him from the hall, and yourself from the Castle, that night; but this relation will amuse you as we go on our way.”

Hendrick soon finished his tankard, and they left the lieutenant undiscovered in his corner, to digest the agreeable things which had just been spoken of him. Such eulo-

giums generally fell to his lot when his back was turned. He stole away as he had entered, unobserved—quite satisfied that Bortoni was just the person whom he had come to seek.

NOTES.



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At last the inhabitants of the town beginning to suffer distress from want of provisions, and Maurice finding it impossible to protract measures any longer, without filling the Emperor with such suspicions as might have disconcerted all his measures, he concluded a treaty of capitulation.—*Robertson's Charles the Fifth*, vol. iv. p. 43.

Magdeburg, its name signifies the maiden city, which some imagine took its name from the temple of Venus, which is said to have stood here anciently, and to have been destroyed by Charlemagne.—*Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. xii. p. 345, *Edin.* 1823.

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Ce fut en ce tems là que Lazare Schwendi vint au camp, de la part de l'Empereur, pour veiller sur la conduite de Maurice, dont la lenteur, et les frequens petits combats, donnoient aux Impériaux lieu de croire, qu'il affectoit de tenir le siège en longueur.—*De Thou*, tome i. livre vi. p. 438, 4to. ed. Londres.

Much about this time, Lazarus Schwendi came to the camp, that in the Emperor's name he might assist Duke Maurice with his counsel.—*Sleidan*, book xxii, p. 504.

“But through this very channel by which he expected to gain access to all Maurice's councils, and even to his thoughts, such intelligence was conveyed to him as completed his deception. Maurice fortunately discovered the correspondence of the two traitors with Granvelle, but instead of punishing them for their crime, he dexterously availed himself of their fraud, and turned his own arts against the bishop. He affected to treat these ministers with greater confidence than ever ; he admitted them to his consultations ; he seemed to lay open his heart to them, and taking care all the while to let them be acquainted with nothing but what it was his interest should be known, they transmitted to Inspruck such accounts as possessed Granvelle with

a firm belief of his sincerity as well as good intentions.—*Robertson's Charles the Fifth*, vol. iv. book x. p. 69; *Melvil. Mémoires*, fol. edit. p. 12.

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This treaty was concluded on the 5th of October, some time before Magdeburg surrendered, and the preparatory negociations were conducted with such profound secrecy, that of all the princes who afterwards acceded to it, Maurice communicated what he was carrying on to two only—John Albert, the reigning Duke of Mecklenburg, and William of Hesse, the Landgrave's eldest son. — *Robertson's Charles the Fifth*, vol. iv. p. 61; *De Thou*, tome ii. livre viii. p. 87.

“ Les conditions furent que le Roi de France et les Princes Protestans déclareroient ensemble la guerre à l'Empereur, pour conserver la liberté du corps Germanique, et pour tirer le Landgrave de Hesse de la captivité où il étoit depuis quatre ans.—*De Barre*, tome viii. p. 839.

Some also the Emperor wholly excluded from his grace, as being more notorious rebels; and amongst these were Duke George of Wirtemberg, Albert Count Mansfeldt, John Count Heideck, and the Counts of Ottinghen, father and son, &c. &c.—*Steidan*, book xix. p. 436.

La rigueur excessive de l'Empereur se fit sentir à plusieurs seigneurs en particulier, auxquels il ne

voulut faire aucune grace. De ce nombre furent Georges, frere du Duc de Wirtemberg, Louis d'Oettingen, Albert de Mansfeld, et Jean de Heideck, dont tous les biens furent confisqués.—*P. Barre*, tome viii. p. 756.

Before the terms of capitulation were settled, Maurice had held many conferences with Albert Count Mansfeldt, who had the chief command in Magdeburg. He consulted likewise with Count Heideck, an officer who had served with great reputation in the army of the league of Smalkalde, whom the Emperor had proscribed on account of his zeal for that cause, but whom Maurice had, notwithstanding, secretly engaged in his service, and admitted into the most secret confidence.—*Robertson's Charles the Fifth*, vol. iv. book x. p. 44.

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November 3, Count Heideck came from Duke Maurice to Magdeburg, and having called out the officers of the garrison to a castle hard by the city, he fully concluded a peace, and thereupon drew up and signed articles of peace, &c.; wherein it was provided that the soldiers should have a safe conduct to depart whither they pleased with security; and this was done the 8th day of the same month; but so soon as they were disbanded, they were secretly listed again under the command of the Duke

of Meckleberg, now by the pacification set at liberty, for Duke Maurice would not be seen in it himself.—*Sleidan*, book xxii. p. 529 ; *P. Barre*, tome viii. p. 836.

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This damped all the hopes which the Protestants began to conceive of Maurice in consequence of his declaration, and left them more than ever at a loss to guess his real intentions. Their former distrust of him revived, and the divines of Magdeburg filled Germany with writings, in which they represented him as the most formidable enemy of the Protestant religion, who treacherously assumed an appearance of zeal for its interest, that he might more effectually execute his schemes for its destruction.—*Robertson's History of the Reign of Charles the Fifth*, vol. iv. book x. p. 18.

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... That they should set at liberty the Duke of Meckleberg and the rest of the prisoners. The same day the soldiers of the garrison marched out, to the number of two thousand foot, and about an hundred and thirty horse, and Duke Maurice commanded five companies of foot to march in. Next day he made his entry with his whole army, having been met by the senate, and made them all swear to be true to the emperor and himself, who had been Commander in Chief in the war ; and then leaving

a garrison in the town drew out the rest.—*Sleidan*, book xxii. p. 528.

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Le seizième de Novembre, Maurice, à la tête de son armée entra en triomphe dans Magdebourg, où il convoqua peu après les Etats-Généraux. La noblesse, le peuple, et les députés du territoire s'y rendirent en affluence, dans l'impatience de voir Maurice, qu'ils regardoient comme le héros de l'Allemagne. On procéda d'abord à l'élection des Sénateurs, afin de remplir la place de ceux qui étoient morts pendant le siège. Maurice eut l'adresse de ne laisser tomber le choix des états que sur des gens qui tenoient à lui par des graces et des bienfaits. L'orateur ayant ensuite représenté la nécessité qu'il y avoit d'élire un Burgrave, toute l'assemblée, d'une voix unanime, déféra cette dignité à Maurice. Maurice de son côté promit à la ville de lui conserver ses privilèges et la liberté de Religion.—*P. Barre*, tome viii. p. 836 ; *De Thou*, tome ii. livre vi. p. 85.

L'assemblée se tint dans la place publique ; et la, le traité d'alliance perpetuelle fut conclu, en conservant à la ville tous ses privileges et la liberté de la religion ; on engagea en même tems à garantir de toute insulte et de tout dommage, non seulement la ville, mais aussi le pays d'alentour : tous se passa au grand contentement des bourgeois, et Maurice fut salué Burgrave de Magdebourg, avec l'applaudissement général de toute la ville ; l'armée se retira,

et on ne laissa dans Magdebourg que cinq compagnées de gens de guerre, comme il en étoit convenu. — *De Thou*, tome ii. livre vi. p. 85, 2d ed. Londres ; *P. Barre*, tome viii. p. 836 ; *Robertson*, vol. iv. book x. p. 45.

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Otho the First, and his Empress Editha, daughter of Edmund the Saxon King of England, founded the city of Magdeburg, also a Benedictine Convent here, which Otho converted into an Archbishopric. The Archbishop was a Count Palatine, had great privileges, was entitled to wear the Archiepiscopal pallium, and have the cross borne before him.

The first tournament in Germany is said to have been appointed near this city, by the Emperor Henry the Fowler. Otho and his Empress Editha, are buried in the cathedral of St. Maurice.—*Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. xii. p. 345. *Edin. Edit.* 1823.

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See Arnoldi Vitâ Mauriti.

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Duke Maurice made the people of Catzenelbogen, a people of the dominion of Hesse, who three years before, had, by the Emperor's sentence, been taken from the Landgrave, then prisoner, to swear allegiance to him, with the consent of the Landgrave's sons.—*Sleidan*, book xxiii. p. 526 ; *P. Barre*, tome viii. p. 837.

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Afterwards he ordered the preachers to be called together, and by the mouth of his counsellors, Fuchsen, Carlebitz, and Mordeysen, he complained of the injustice that had been done unto him by libels and pictures, which they dispersed abroad to his infamy, as if he had fallen away from the reformed religion, &c.—*Sleidan*, book xxii. p. 528.

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During these days that Duke Maurice was in the town, he gave some intimation plain enough of what he hatched in his thoughts, and that was — that he would hazard his life, but that he would deliver his father-in-law, nor did he dissemble the day after, when he was put to it by a certain person.—*Sleidan*, book xxii. p. 529.

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The Landgrave was ignominiously placed on horseback, his sword chained to the scabbard, and under the guard of Spanish soldiers who treated him with indignity, intruding upon him even at night; an officer withdrawing the bed clothes to assure himself that he was safe, and pointing him out to his guards. The Emperor carried him about with him; when he knelt to the Emperor, believing he would be favourably dealt with, he smiled. Charles shook his finger and observed to his courtiers, “I will teach him to laugh.”

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